# THE SAFETY and PERPETUITY OF THE BRITISH STATE,

Under the Influence of

## Political and Religious ZEAL.

Being the Subſtance of ſeveral

## DISCOURSES

Preach'd before the

## UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE

DURING THE

## Late REBELLION and preſent WAR.

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By W. WESTON, B.D.
Fellow of St. JOHN's College, CAMBRIDGE.

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*Pars ſanitatis velle ſanari fuit.* SENEC.

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M.DCC.LIX.

BIBL
CANT
ACAD

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

# WILLIAM PITT, Eſq;

One of His MAJESTY's Principal SECRETARIES of STATE.

SIR,

THOUGH I am the firſt in an Addreſs to you from this place, (many of whoſe literary labours might perhaps have a fairer claim to your protection;) yet I am not without ſome ſufficient reaſons to juſtify this ſingularity; and I hope likewiſe, to excuſe my preſumption.

For tho' there is little in the bulk, and perhaps leſs in the merit of the following pages, to make me call for ſo eminent and diſtinguiſh'd a Patron; yet the Subject of them has ſuch relation, and the Zeal of them ſuch reſemblance to the generous labours of Mr. *Pitt*, that I cannot eaſily reſiſt this double motive to flatter my vanity.

I will add yet another motive to juſtify my choice, which is a certain knowledge, that there is not a greater ſimilarity in our labours, than diſintereſtedneſs in our intentions: So that being altogether unknown to you, and without even intimating to you the liberty at preſent here taken, I have the conſcious ſatisfaction of pre-

fixing

fixing your name, not with a view to raiſe my fortunes, but my ſubject; not to procure a reward, but ſanction to my endeavours; not, in ſhort, to call for any the leaſt favour which your ſtation can confer; but to have the public honour of co-operating in my lower ſphere with the great Defender of his Country.

And indeed a man muſt be loſt to all ſenſe of virtue, who does not think this a ſufficient reward for much greater labours than are here undertaken; who does not catch by it, at leaſt, ſome portion of that noble Enthuſiaſm which animates your conduct; and who is not tranſported with the view of being in ſome degree Partaker with you of ſuch ſubſtantial

Honours, as no Citizen in any former age has ever receiv'd.

THE illuſtrious aſſertor of the *Roman* liberties at their approaching diſſolution, comes in many reſpects the neareſt to the great Aſſertor of the *Britiſh* in a like dangerous Criſis: But as he had not united your talents to your virtues, no wonder that he fell ſhort of that peculiar eſteem, and that ſingular veneration with which you have been receiv'd: — He was applauded by the Poet of his own Party, and Philoſopher of his own complexion; he was even idoliz'd by a few, who had exalted notions of liberty; and by the greatneſs of his Death he ſo far reconciled the Antipathies of the State, as in a manner to force

force them with one Conſent to do juſtice to his memory: — But you have not only done all this in that more obnoxious ſituation, while Faction yet barked, and your Glories ſhone full on the head of Envy; but you have triumph'd over Oppoſition by thoſe very principles which in theſe times ſhould create it; and you have extorted from the mouth of even Corruption itſelf, the unwonted tribute of ſincere applauſe to thoſe very Virtues, which muſt end in it's Extinction.

FROM this Omen I am led to look forward into futurity with better hopes, and to ſpeak again to my Countrymen on the Subject of their defence with fuller expectations: I flatter

myſelf, that the Seeds of public virtue which are ſpread thro' thoſe Diſcourſes will now fall upon a more favourable Soil, and be bleſs'd with more indulgent Heavens, than in any former period: — In a word, I am not without a certain pleaſing Conviction, that what the cooler voice of reaſon has long ſuggeſted, the warmer impreſſions of your Eloquence will, in ſome meaſure effect; and what the louder calls of virtue have earneſtly demanded, the more ſilent perſuaſion of your example, will in a great degree accompliſh; ſo that at length, with the conjunction of theſe irreſiſtible forces, you will burſt thro' the impediments of every vice; and ſometime ſave even in ſpite of themſelves, a generous, tho' corrupted people.

THAT I may not be deceiv'd in theſe flattering expectations, and that you may ſoon be congratulated with one common voice on the ſolid peace, and laſting proſperity of your grateful and affectionate Country, is the ardent prayer of

*Sir*,

*Your moſt devoted*,

*and moſt obedient Servant*,

W. WESTON.

# PREFACE.

*THE following pages being for the moſt part deliver'd in diſtreſsful conjunctures, and intended chiefly to rouſe the attention of my Countrymen to their true Intereſt and Safety; it will not be expected that this Treatiſe ſhould be ſo methodical, as it would otherwiſe have been: And ſince in order to apply my Directions more properly, it became me to be clear in the Defects complain'd of; I have been oblig'd in ſome particulars to take a larger compaſs, than at firſt view ſeems conſiſtent with the original deſign.*

*This is one of the true reaſons for the number of the Chapters on Ridicule:*

*cule: The other reaſons are, that as this vice ſtood full in the way of our progreſs to zeal; as the enquiry was in a manner new; as the point might neither be granted, nor the ill conſequences of it ſeen by a few vague reflexions; it was neceſſary in the firſt place, to ſettle with ſome preciſion, the exiſtence of the fact; and then to ſhew it's unfriendly influence on Society.*

*This is likewiſe the caſe with regard to Infidelity; and theſe two points it is only incumbent on me to defend; for I am not convinc'd of either the ſoftneſs and effeminacy, or other aggravated complaints againſt the nation, which were in a great meaſure prov'd by experience to be falſe, almoſt in the ſame moment that they were made: And it would give me ſingular pleaſure, if mine could be prov'd ſo too: But the*

*Bur-*

**Burleſque that was begun in our adverſity, and continued in our proſperity, bode ill to the gratification of that benevolent wiſh.*

*I ſhall only add, that when once the great impediments that lay croſs to my intention were remov'd, I thought it became me to be as ſhort as poſſible in the other ſteps and gradations, that were to be mention'd as requiſites to the main deſign: And having neither inſiſted on the expediency of laws to curb the national Vices; nor the neceſſity of tincturing the riſing Generation with other Principles; the Reader will ſee that I apply only to his own reaſon and choice; and content myſelf chiefly with ſuch hints and obſervations,*

* See Two ludicrous things in proſe and verſe, one againſt the Militia, the other call'd *The Simile*, ſuppos'd both to come from the ſame Author.

*which,*

*which, tho' very efficacious, are yet eaſily diſcover'd.*

*And indeed this is the method that all the Writers of Morality have ever follow'd; and we hear no more from one of the beſt of them on a ſimilar occaſion than this:*

Sunt verba & voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Poſſis, & magnam morbi deponere partem.

*Which words will be beſt commented on to the* Engliſh *Reader, by aſſuring him, that when once the mental diſorder is known, the remedy is not far to ſeek: Free-will'd Agents, with proper application, have it always in their own power; and if they reſolve to be ſo, they may.*

CON-

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THE

# THE SAFETY and PERPETUITY OF THE BRITISH STATE,

## Under the Influence of POLITICAL and RELIGIOUS ZEAL.

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### CHAP. I.

### *Of the Power of Zeal in regard to the State.*

IT is not my intention in this Chapter to give myſelf any trouble about ſettling the exact boundaries of zeal, or mark out the preciſe line between the true and the falſe, but chiefly to ſhew that there is a uſe reſulting from them both that is for the moſt part ſo advantageous to every State as to promote whilſt it laſts the glory of it's

arms, and almoſt certainly prevent it's final diſſolution.

I ſhall therefore from a detail of many eminent examples in hiſtory ſhew the exceeding great difficulty of conquering any nation which is zealous for it's government and religion: and as many of theſe examples are ſuch as falſe zeal gave birth to, the application of them will be more forcible to us, if we are rightly influenced by the true.

I will begin with ſome inſtances of thoſe nations, who, having a different religion from *Chriſtians*, could not be ſo rationally influenced in their conduct: nay, the followers of that Impoſtor who was a ſenſualiſt himſelf, and endeavoured to implant the expectation of ſenſual rewards in his diſciples, could not be rationally influenced in their conduct at all: and yet when a zeal for their religion and guide became a principle of their actions; it gave them a conſtancy and perſeverance in their ſufferings, and hurried them to dangers with ſuch

a vio-

a violence and impetuoſity as made it almoſt impoſſible to withſtand them: inſomuch that it was chiefly owing to this conſideration that from a weak, divided, and even deſpicable people, they became the dread and terrour of mankind, and invaded and ſubdued the moſt powerful nations with a *ſwiftneſs and rapidity* that is almoſt ſingle on record.

THE [a] *Turks* who ſucceeded them in their conqueſt and religion were a people which aroſe from very ſmall beginnings; and if they had not *drank deep* of the extatic manners of their predeceſſors, they never could have made ſuch powerful efforts in the infancy of their ſtate, nor afterwards arrived through ſo many difficulties at ſuch extenſive dominion.

[a] The *Turks* were an inconſiderable people when called from *Turcomania*, a northern part of *Armenia*, to aſſiſt *Mahomet* the *Saracen* Sultan, when taking that religion they were poſſeſſed with it's fury; and overcame all that reſiſted, and even the *Saracens* themſelves who invited them to their aid.

*Knolles. Turk. Hiſt.* p. 4.

THE *Chriſtians*, who ſet out in the Eaſtern expedition, ſet out in an expedition the moſt difficult and hopeleſs that could poſſibly be imagined; againſt a [b] great people; at unity with themſelves; ſurrounded with allies; and at home: whilſt *they* were at the mercy of the moſt variable things in nature, the winds and ſeas; were obliged to fight at the greateſt diſadvantage under the inclemencies of a climate unſuitable to their conſtitution; were each of them at ſuch a diſtance from his reſpective country, that it could not relieve them in their misfortunes, and muſt be [c] ruined by their ſucceſs; and to compleat all, were compoſed of nations ſo jarring [d] in their intereſts, and irreconcileable in their tempers,

[b] The *Turks* who had newly conquered the *Saracens*, and united themſelves againſt the *Chriſtians*.

[c] Chiefly by their long abſence on this account; when their own nation became a prey to ambitious pretenders, and the intrigues of the Pope.

[d] The two principal parties were the *French* and *Engliſh*.

as

as naturally to be greater enemies to *each other*, than to *him* they attempted to ſubdue.

In ſhort, conſidering all this, together with the ſhipwrack and misfortunes of ſome of the principal commanders, one may affirm of this ſtrange and chimerical undertaking the direct contrary to what the [e] poet does of his hero's, that the *very elements* were againſt it, and the winds and ſeas conſpired to it's deſtruction. — Yet what elements are too powerful for zeal? what ſeas can interrupt it's courſe? what tempeſts can ſhake it's ſtability? what viciſſitudes can change it's purpoſe? what antipathies diſſolve it's union? — Even under theſe circumſtances the Chriſtians fought and conquered.

The *Heathens* on account of their intercommunity of gods could not be ſo zealous for their religion; but they were for their ſtate; and the ſame effects were produced:

[e] *Claudian.*

— The *Romans* are the moſt eminent inſtances of both kinds of this political zeal, the falſe, and the true; falſe, whilſt it puſhed them on to conqueſt; true, when it animated them in their own defence: but as we are now conſidering the former, I will give an example of that. — The ſtory of *Regulus* is either true according to the letter, or has ſome foundation, or, which is much the ſame thing to us, was applauded even in [f] idea by a people enthuſiaſtically bent on conqueſt, and the oppreſſion of their fellow-creatures: and what could eaſily reſiſt this diſpoſition of mind? who could ever hope for a ſucceſsful oppoſition to armies of men ſo attached to their country, as to ſuffer the moſt various and exquiſite tortures, rather than contribute to the loſs of it's acquiſitions, or diminution of it's glory?

[f] So much, that *Cicero*, ſpeaking of this account of *Regulus*, ſays, that it was no extraordinary thing in him, but was the virtue of the times rather than the man. *Cic. de Offic.* lib. 3.

THE

THE *Roman* armies indeed could ſcarce ever be ſo compoſed as that every man ſhould be a *Regulus*, though we have heard of ſome modern ones that were; men little known to the *Chriſtian* world, but who deſerve to be expoſed to the moſt public deteſtation; ſince from them the horrid name of [g] Aſſaſſin is very juſtly derived; and they are ſo utterly *devoured* by the dreadful principle we are conſidering, as inſtantly to ſubmit to any ſort of death at the command of their general.

THE *Mahometans* one would think had a ſufficient portion of their madneſs to encounter any oppoſers to the holy progreſs of their arms; but here they found themſelves out-done, and fearfully ſhrunk back from the combat with ſo fierce and untractable an enemy. — The ſight of theſe

[g] They were ſo named from the poignard they made uſe of to execute the commands of their Seignior, and which in the *Perſian* language was called Haſſiſin.

*Vertot*'s Hiſt. of the Knights of Malta. vol. 1.

wretches devoting themſelves to deſtruction at the nod of their leader ſhook their moſt ſtedfaſt reſolutions; and his ſolemn declaration, that he had myriads of the ſame ſubjects equally reſigned to his will, had ſomething *too ſhocking* in it to be ſupported even by enthuſiaſts themſelves[h].

BUT let us withdraw our eyes from theſe monſters of humanity to thoſe who would be eſteemed it's ornament and credit, but never can really be ſo, whilſt they are under ſuch circumſtances, as, however palliated, muſt always be diſgraceful to our nature; *i.e.* whilſt they are in chains themſelves, and endeavour to fix them on the reſt of mankind.

[h] The Souldan of *Damas* ſending to the Aſſaſſins for a demand of tribute, their Seignior (for ſo their monarch is called) ordered one of his men to leap down a precipice, the other to ſtab himſelf; which they both did immediately; and then he ſent the abovementioned meſſage.

*Vertot*'s Hiſt. of the Knights of *Malta*. v. 1. ed. 8vo.

IT will eaſily be perceived that I mean our reſtleſs and perpetual enemy the *French*; than whom there never was any wiſe and poliſhed nation more *in love* with tyranny, and more *devoted* to their monarch; and I wiſh I could ſay that they are not celebrated inſtances of the benefits this temper has occaſioned; I wiſh I could ſay that it has not been the reaſon of fewer commotions within, and more impotent attacks on them from without; and I wiſh moſt of all I could ſay, that it has not been the reaſon of their aſſaulting others with greater reſolution and greater force, than could be expected from ſuch a weak and effeminate people.

BUT no natural impediments were ſuperior to zeal; to which every thing that ſhould have hindered their progreſs to grandeur has inſenſibly given way: and from hence chiefly has accrued through ſo many difficulties that extenſive influence to a people, who are formed by nature, and placed in a climate for pleaſure; feeble

in their bodies, and diſſipated in their minds; variable in their tempers, and fluctuating in their reſolutions; unanimated by liberty, and unencouraged by reaſon.

So much at preſent for the influence of falſe zeal, it will be more agreeable to us, who are defending the moſt excellent cauſe, to conſider the influence of the true; and it will be an addition to this pleaſure if we farther conſider that the former is more ſuited for conqueſt, the latter for defence.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Power of true Zeal.*

BEING now to give inſtances of true zeal, in the firſt place, that of the primitive *Chriſtians* muſt ſtrike every one's obſervation, who ſupported with patience, with cheerfulneſs, with rapture the diſtreſſes of life, and underwent the moſt lingering and painful torments with a fortitude and reſolution that *amazed* the world.

BUT becauſe ſome may ſuppoſe that there was ſomething ſupernatural in this, let us proceed to what is confeſſedly otherwiſe.—The *Romans* in their earlieſt ages, whilſt they were uncorrupted by wealth, and the ſenſe of liberty was ſtrong, were undoubtedly one of the moſt zealous and public-ſpirited nations that ever appeared in the world: and as no other had been brought up with ſuch a love for their country and attachment to their ſtate, ſo

it *broke out* on certain occaſions in ſuch violent, and impetuous efforts, that it ſeemed upon the whole to be more enthuſiaſm than judgement, and more ecſtacy than reaſon.

AND whilſt this warm and animating paſſion held it's place in their breaſts, it ſtrongly bore them up in the greateſt exigencies of their ſtate; and ſtruck their moſt powerful and ſucceſsful invaders with horror and ſurprize: the deſperate action of *Scævola* made *Porſena* tremble in the midſt of his conqueſt; and ſomething even in their defeats appeared ſo formidable to *Pyrrhus*, that he was forced to confeſs that another victory would undo him.

THE *Lacedæmonians* ſeem to be moſt like the *Romans* in love to their country, the nature of their government, and their particular complexions: and whilſt, like them, they kept themſelves pure from corruption and undiſſolved by luxury, they were as illuſtrious examples of the effects of zeal, as any nation on record: the hiſtory of indi-

individuals, even of their boys and their women, contains the moſt glorious and memorable tranſactions; and the ſtreights of *Thermopylæ* will for ever convince us, that this principle may be oppoſed like a wall of braſs to armies as numerous as the ſand of the ſea.

THE time would fail me if I was to confirm this reaſoning from the various examples which might be collected from the little republicks of *Greece*, and other governments of antiquity: I proceed therefore to what will more nearly affect us; the inſtances of the Reformation.

AND here in this liſt ſtand foremoſt with *bright* and *diſtinguiſhed marks* the immortal Deliverers of the *United Provinces*: men, who firſt were leagued againſt the tyranny of the Inquiſition; then againſt the cruel and blood-thirſty religion that encouraged it: and afterwards embraced one of the pureſt kinds of Chriſtianity with the moſt determined courage and the moſt ardent zeal.

AND when they had got thus far every obſtacle was ſurmounted; they began to flouriſh in the midſt of oppreſſion, and even with weak and deſpicable armies fearleſsly encountered the whole power of *Spain*; and though they did not conquer, yet they reſiſted ſo boldly, ſo obſtinately, and ſo long, that they not only emancipated themſelves from the oppreſſive government of their invaders; but broke the force, diminiſhed the grandeur, and defeated the contrivances of that haughty nation, which was then the *terrour* of the Chriſtian world.

NEITHER ought a like conduct of theſe illuſtrious Provinces to be forgot, when we in conjunction with our moſt dreadful [i] enemy unnaturally conſpired their deſtruction: when victory after victory was obtained againſt them, and the wars of *Pyrrhus* with the Roman ſtate ſeemed to

[i] *France*, with which nation we were leagued againſt the *Dutch* in the reign of *Charles* the Second.

be

be acted over again: when conſtancy and perſeverance on the part of the vanquiſhed was equal to victory on the part of the conqueror; when the reſolute anſwer of our Proteſtant [k]Deliverer made the [l]tyrant of the age ſtop ſhort in his career, till at length a ſpirit inflexible and firm diſperſed the clouds that hung over the ſtate, and it *broke out* on a ſudden with the ſame

[k] King *William*; of whom it is reported, that when in the worſt ſtate of his affairs he was told by the Duke of *Buckingham*, that his country was loſt; he anſwered, that it was indeed in great danger, but that there was a ſure way never to ſee it loſt, and that was, to die in the laſt ditch.

*Burnet*'s *Hiſt. of his own times.* vol. 1.

[l] *Lewis* the Fourteenth, who in his firſt attempts ſtruck the United Provinces with univerſal conſternation; but they recovered ſoon after the Prince of *Orange* had animated them with the view of religion and liberty: after this *Lewis* was ſo afraid of the deſperate temper of the *Dutch*, that he thought them capable of undertaking any thing rather than periſh; on which account he durſt not lodge within *Utrecht*, for fear of mines laid under the ſtreets.

*Burnet*'s *Hiſt. of his own times.* vol. 1.

*aſto-*

*aſtoniſhing* ſplendor, with which it at firſt aroſe.

BUT the hiſtory of this people is not a ſingular effect of the glorious ardor of the Reformation; it ſunk deep into the hearts of their neighbour [m] nation, and produced as extraordinary events: — It made them averſe to ſuperſtition, and out of love with thraldom; it carried them farther than was agreeable to their natural bent in reſiſtance to their kings; and gave them confidence to own, and ſtrength to ſupport it: nor could they at all have been ſubdued, though the influence of the court, the number of troops, and the wealth of the kingdom was againſt them, except it had been for as *perfidious* a treatment, and as *barbarous* a maſſacre as any hiſtory has produced.

THE *Germans* were very early engaged in this illuſtrious cauſe, and engaged in it with a warmth that gave a vigour to their

[m] The reformed of *France*.

councils,

[n] councils, determinations, and tranſactions, beyond what is common to the nature of their government in general, or their tempers and complexions in particular; nor could they otherwiſe have *bore up* after ſo many defeats, nor *extorted* from the [o] prince they had to contend with an eſtabliſhment of their religion, in ſpite of his policy; in ſpite of his ſtrengh; in ſpite of his own attachment to the Catholic faith, and general hatred of the Reformation.

NEITHER are we ourſelves the leaſt memorable examples of the truth of this point in the ſeveral periods of our hiſtory: In the long reign of that illuſtrious princeſs, when the Reformation took ſo deep a root, as never afterwards to be ſhaken; it took root amidſt the moſt violent and outrageous ſhocks that ever happened to our

[n] After the edict of *Spires* they came to a ſpeedy reſolution unanimouſly to proteſt againſt it; on which occaſion they were called *Proteſtants*.

[o] *Charles* V. the moſt powerful and bigoted prince of his time.

iſle; but zeal for the conſtitution in Church and State made all oppoſition vain: It was ſuperior to [p] conſpiracies, to [q] invaſions, and [r] rebellions: it gave a *ſplendour* to a reign which in many parts of it had the moſt *gloomy* appearance, and long before it's end had broke and diſſipated with ſingular good fortune the ſtorms that threatened from every quarter of the world.

I do not know whether I ought to mention on this occaſion the melancholy times of that unfortunate monarch, whoſe infringments on the conſtitution gave birth to thoſe commotions, which lateſt poſterity muſt feel: But certainly there was a zeal in the firſt oppoſers of that prince, which ought to have produced more ſalutary effects; and if afterwards the paſſions and and intereſts of men were mixed with it, and it was at length almoſt abſorbed in

[p] The conſpiracies of *Mary* Queen of *Scots*, and the *Guiſes* of *France* her uncles.

[q] The invaſion of the *Armada*.

[r] The rebellion of *Ireland*.

another

another and more dangerous kind of it; yet ſtill from the beginning to the end of thoſe diſtractions, we learn in every period what *Enthuſiaſm* can do.

BUT if in theſe times zeal did not appear pure and unſullyed, it did ſoon after; and our fathers at the Revolution beheld it in all it's genuine luſtre and original beauty; when ſtripped of all mean and unworthy views it united the nation againſt the encroachments of Popery, and made them equally firm againſt the terrours of affliction, and the blandiſhments of pleaſure; when it made the ſword fall from the hands of armies deſigned for our deſtruction, charmed down the ſpirit of the unnatural promoters of tyranny and oppreſſion; and without bloodſhed, and without diſorder fixed the government on that rock of liberty, on which it at preſent ſecurely reſts; and on which we hope the waves of oppoſition will beat eternally in vain.

AND now after this *cloud of witneſſes*, is not the voice of their exhortation audible

and loud? Does not every ſpecies of zeal here inſiſted on, from the extravagant ſtarts and ſallies of madneſs to the ſobereſt reflexions of reaſon and religion, recommend to poſterity this excellent inſtruction, That every nation that is influenced by it for it's government cannot eaſily miſcarry?

NOTHING indeed can be more true than this; but I am aware that the knowledge of this alone will be of little uſe to any people; that it is nothing to ſhew that zeal will do good, except we can ſhew the method of acquiring it at firſt, or reviving it after it's decay; that this laſt eſpecially is a point of the utmoſt conſequence, ſince however fond nations may be of their reſpective governments at firſt, yet it is common with them, as it is with particulars, to have revolutions in their principles, their affections, and eſteem; and as it is neceſſary often that government ſhould be brought back to it's firſt principles in order to be ſecure, ſo it is neceſſary likewiſe, on the

the ſame account, that it ſhould be brought back to the hearts and affections of the people.

IT does not appear that this is altogether the caſe with the people of *England* at preſent, and it is to be hoped it never will; but becauſe there ſeems to have been ſome conſiderable diminution of this heavenly flame ſince the birth of the Reformation, that no ſpark of it may be loſt, we ſhould now conſider the means to preſerve it. But this muſt be conſidered in the following chapters.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of the exceſſes of Ridicule in this kingdom.*

THAT zeal in religious matters is a quality requiſite to the Chriſtian life, and abſolutely neceſſary to eternal ſalvation, the whole tenour of the Goſpel will not ſuffer us to doubt; and that zeal in civil matters is altogether as requiſite to the Political life, and abſolutely neceſſary to the welfare of the State has been ſufficiently inſiſted on in the foregoing chapter.

BUT becauſe it is not enough to ſhew what qualities we ought to have, unleſs we can in ſome degree point out the means of attaining them; I muſt now enter upon that ſubject, which I ſhould not do at any other time without conſiderable diffidence, or at ſome ſeaſons without extreme deſpair.

I am ſufficiently aware how hard a thing it is to mend the heart of a ſimple indi-

individual, much more of a collective body, eſpecially if it has been long and deeply immers'd in ſuch follies and vices as are directly oppoſite to the virtue to be attain'd: But as this cannot be ſaid with any juſtice to have been the caſe with the *Britiſh* people when they were at the worſt, and more eſpecially as they have ſhewn of late ſome conſiderable remains of vigour, ſome favourable ſymptoms of returning health, in which caſe the weakeſt remedy thrown in, is more efficacious than the ſtrongeſt at another time; it ſhould ſeem on theſe accounts that the preſent undertaking is not ſo viſionary and ſo hopeleſs a work as ſome may be apt to imagine.

BUT that it may even to theſe appear more practicable ſtill, and that we may riſe by gentle and eaſy ſteps to theſe heights of public virtue, which are always inacceſſible to the firſt efforts; let us begin only with a reſolution to be ſerious: For however ſimple the remedy may ſeem, it will in the end effectually root out one of the moſt

dangerous maladies that has infected the State.

It was an antient cuſtom in the Chriſtian church for the Deacon to pronounce to the aſſembly this ſhort admonition, **Surſum Corda:* as knowing that when once that was effectually done, the great work of devotion was not far behind. There is ſomething exactly ſimilar in the ſubject before us: For the affections of men chain'd down to earth, and devoted to ſenſe are not more averſe to heavenly things, than the preſent age abandon'd to laughter and ridicule is abhorrent of ſedate and ſober reflexion. — Nor is it diſtinguiſhed ſo much from the antient world, nor indeed from the greateſt part of the preſent, by that ſoftneſs and effeminacy ſo confidently objected to it, as by that profuſion of wanton and indiſcriminate banter, which hath taken poſſeſſion of the appetites, the reaſon and the heart.

* *Let your hearts be above.*

THAT this is not paradox, but fact, will appear inconteſtably to thoſe who view with diſcerning eyes, the manners and cuſtoms, the diverſions and employments, the books and converſation, of thoſe who ſtyle themſelves the more liberal part of the *Engliſh* people: A people that were once dignify'd with the manly Epithets of ſedate, open, and ſincere; but are now become light, artificial, and diſguis'd.

BUT let us deſcend into particulars from whence only this truth can be collected: If ſedateneſs and ſobriety ſhould in any places, or on any occaſion ſhine forth with diſtinguiſh'd luſtre, one would think it ſhould be at the Tribunals of Law, and in all things relating to the Church and the State.

YET in the firſt of theſe what wantonneſs and levity, nay, what farce and buffoonery is often ſeen? How do the advocates of the reſpective parties frolic it with each other, and make it in a manner their principal contention who ſhall moſt cruelly

ſport

ſport with property, reputation, and on ſome particular occaſions, with even life itſelf?

NOR is this done only upon ſome certain points where the jocular manner might be ſeaſonably called in, but upon thoſe alſo which are totally repugnant to it both in their nature and conſequences: Nor is it done only by the reſpective Orators to make each other contemptible, and leſſen the weight of their ſeveral claims in the opinion of the preſiding magiſtrate; but it is employ'd alſo upon innocent ſubjects, and victims that are to bleed in conteſts which are not their own.

NAY, what is ſtill worſe than all this, when the preceding lives of their Clients, their Witneſſes and Protectors, are no ways relative to the point in queſtion, yet how common is it to tear them open to find occaſion of merriment, and wantonly inſult over thoſe failings and infirmities which meer humanity ſhould conceal?

How they can make ſuch a practice conſiſtent with the principles of their Law, and

and more eſpecially with tenderneſs and charity to their Species, I am at a loſs to determine; but this I will be bold to ſay, that no Law can ever be more neceſſary than one againſt the abuſe of it; and no abuſe of it can well be greater than needleſſly to expoſe the weakneſſes of their fellow-creatures, and pry into thoſe ſecret and prohibited avenues where no man can be ſecure.

It ſhould ſeem to me that nothing can well be a more plauſible proof of the point we are maintaining, than this conduct of the bar: The Queſtions for the moſt part agitated there, do almoſt ever require a ſeries of plain and manly arguments, and a manner of deſcanting on them that is ſolemn and ſedate: And this is not only more natural, but more eaſy to be acquired, than juſt ſallies of mirth and delicate repartee: But what difficulties will men not attempt, and into what abſurdities will they not deviate, when it is the mode to banter, and when it is reputable to be witty?

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PROCEED we next to the affairs of State; which are generally ſo complicated, ſo hazardous, and uncertain, that no conduct of the Stateſman, tho' ever ſo conſummately wiſe, and no zeal of the Patriot, tho' ever ſo exuberantly warm, can eſcape the ſtrokes of obloquy and ſcorn.

IF a Proteſtant King is courted, Proteſtantiſm is made a jeſt; if a Catholic, we laugh at all true religion. — If a good treaty is made, 'twas made only to be broken; if a bad, 'tis juſt what ought to be expected from *Britiſh* Politicians. — If Foreigners are call'd in, the diſtreſs is viſionary, and their aid ſuperfluous; if our own ſtrength is rely'd on, the diſtreſs is dreadful, and never to be ſurmounted by the ſilken ſons of luxury and ſloth. — If our ſoldiery is kept at home, the deſign is to comply with their original inſtitution, for oſtentation, and parade; if they are ſent abroad, 'tis wantonly to employ them where honour will be our diſgrace, and where victory will be our ruin. — If an

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invaſion is feared from an inveterate enemy, the fear ariſes from imaginary fleets and armies in the clouds; if we invade them, 'tis only a piece of the moſt extravagant Quixotiſm againſt walls of braſs: — If a check is receiv'd from an equal enemy, we ſhudder at a ſound; if we are victorious over odds, 'twas our ſtars that ſav'd us. — If Corruption is encourag'd, 'tis only becauſe the puny Stateſman had no other reſource; if efforts are made to ſtop it, they will certainly be found at laſt to be hypocritical and vain.

BUT why do we inſiſt on theſe leſſer particulars, when the very modes of defence which all nations have agreed in, have been laugh'd at as chimerical, and when from one of this train we have been fantaſtically congratulated in the late diſtreſsful conjuncture, of our being in full poſſeſſion of that glorious war, which it was impoſſible for us to avoid?

NAY, ſo far has the ridicule been carry'd by ſuch Authors as theſe, that we muſt,

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what is chiefly aim'd at, be laugh'd out of our ſenſes, before we can admit the groſs contradictions and palpable fooleries, that are alledg'd againſt this juſt and reaſonable method of national defence.

FOR on the one hand, men are taken out of their natural ſituation, and repreſented in a manner as without limbs, and heart; on the other hand, they are increas'd beyond their genuin Size, with limbs more robuſt, and hearts more diſloyal: On the one hand, they are thin and ſhadowy forms that ſtart and diſappear at the ſound of war; on the other hand, they are deſperate and daring villains, that are bent on rapine, deſolation, and blood. — Sometimes our Iſland is not more divided from the reſt of the world in it's ſituation, than it's manners; and the bulk of it's inhabitants are ſo ſingularly circumſtanc'd, as to be unable to hold the ſpear and the ſhield: at other times this ability is indeed graciouſly allow'd them, but then it is their duty to be employ'd rather at the ſpade

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and the mattock, the anvil and the loom, than in defence of liberty, religion, and life.

BUT I wiſh I could ſay that this accurſed Spirit had check'd itſelf here; I wiſh I had not reaſon to be firmly perſuaded that it has operated upon cool and flegmatic Stateſmen, and moulded even the gravity and ſolemnity of their frame into the faſhionable diſpoſition, while they ſarcaſtically pronounc'd to the reproach of their country, that every man's price was known: But I wiſh moſt of all, that there was no room to conclude, that it has often been made uſe of to ſtifle all the warm and generous ſentiments of the youthful breaſt, and to meet him on his entrance on the political ſcene, with a confidently broad and inſulting grin at all thoſe notions of public ſpirit, which he had learnt in books, admired in examples, and been confirm'd in by the true and genuin ſuggeſtions of uncorrupted nature.

BUT how much this has been practis'd, and how deep the ſenſe of it has ſunk into the hearts of our countrymen, will appear from daily and general obſervation; from not only the tart and ſarcaſtic reflexions of men converſant in courts, and ſkilful in corruption; but from the jeſts even of the peaſant, the mechanic, and the clown, on all pretenſions to patriotiſm, and all claims to ſuperiority over the power of gain.

BUT it may become us, perhaps, to hope for better things under the preſent adminiſtration, and to aſſert with the Poet on ſurer principles than occurr'd to him,

*Magnus ab integro ſæclorum naſcitur ordo.*

LET us leave therefore the preſent topic with theſe gleams of hope, and proceed to another much more deſperate, and on which the utmoſt efforts of the moſt pertinacious laughter have been endleſſly employ'd.

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THIS ſubject is religion, a ſubject which an age not abandon'd to frolic would certainly have ſpared; but a ſubject which this age would particularly have ſelected as an object of mirth from a certain knowledge of that indubitable maxim, That the greateſt men when repreſented as acting below their dignity dwindle into the leaſt; and the moſt ſacred things, when trifled with and ridicul'd, appear moſt ridiculous and contemptible.

AND here how ſhall we begin, and where ſhall we ſelect amongſt thoſe numerous inſtances of the preſent age, which has been ſo aſſiduouſly employ'd in exploding ſyſtems, and laughing at creeds, in rudely bantering the ſervants of God, and burleſquing Divinity?

WE read in Scripture, and it was once heard with ſerioufneſs and attention, that *he who deſireth the office of a Biſhop, deſireth a good work:* But now is it not always aſſerted with a diſdainful ſneer, however inconſiderable the Epiſcopal revenue may be,

that the Spiritual views become altogether evaneſcent in compariſon of ſecular proſperity and power?

IT is ſaid in the ſame Scripture with regard to thoſe who wait on the altar, that *the labourer is worthy of his hire:* But how is this interpreted in theſe ludicrous times? How is the ſacred inſtitution of tythes become ſubject to banter, and the tenth of the increaſe made the ſong of the drunkard, and the jeſt of the profane?

*O woman! thy faith hath ſaved thee*, was once the ſtrong and emphatic commendation of the Saviour of ſouls: but O man! thy credulity hath deſtroy'd thee, is oftner repeated and more ſedulouſly inculcated by this bantering generation.

THE doctrine of Grace makes ſo important a part of the Goſpel diſpenſation, that the want of it was once conſider'd, as the moſt deplorable calamity: But now is it not oft mention'd with approving ſmiles,

rather

rather as freedom from formality and all tincture of fanaticiſm, than as extreme deſpair and ſpiritual dereliction?

THE doctrine of the new birth is a point as clear from the Scriptures, as that the Scriptures themſelves are true; and yet how cautiouſly do we tread on this obnoxious ground? How is the renovation of the carnal man unfelt, and ridicul'd by this degenerate age? And how are ſuch as inſiſt on it ignominiouſly claſs'd with thoſe that cant in the conventicle, or bawl out in the field?

BUT it is needleſs to inſiſt on theſe particulars, when the terrors of hell, and the tortures of the damned are vilify'd and ſet at nought; and the fire and brimſtone which were once terrific, are toſs'd about like the arrows of *Solomon*'s fool, and with the ſame reflexion, *Are not we in ſport?*

THERE is one obſervation to be made here, which not only exceedingly aggravates the guilt of the ridicule juſt mention'd, but places it's exceſs in the preſent

times ſo full before us, that the hardieſt ſceptic can ſcarce diſpute it's exiſtence.

THE obſervation is, that this train of light and ludicrous reflexions does not only proceed from thoſe who are both Infidels in principle, and ſtrangers to the wiſe and generous ſentiments of the antient law-givers, who held thoſe in execration who inſulted the eſtabliſh'd religion: But it proceeds likewiſe from numbers who ſeem to be in earneſt in the profeſſion of their faith, and would take it ill not to be thought ſo; nay from thoſe too who would think it an affront to their underſtanding to be told ſo plain a truth as the ill conſequence of their conduct to the very principles they approve.

BUT no earneſtneſs in their faith, nor inconvenience from their conduct, can it ſeems enable them to make any proper reſiſtance to that full tide of ridicule, which comes on with ſo reſiſtleſs and ſo headlong a force as promiſcuouſly to wreck the Infidel and Believer on one common ſhore.

THE ſame obſervation may be made with equal juſtice on the ridiculers of the State: For it is not only it's enemies that do this, but it's lovers and friends; nay, thoſe too who are ſupported by thoſe very benefits and favours which on this account they are unworthy to receive:—But gratitude it ſeems is not ſo ſacred as jeſt, nor affection ſo powerful as ridicule; which is the only thing hitherto diſcover'd that can reconcile the Antipathies of the ſtate, and make them at leaſt agree in one certain qualification, without which no one can pretend to be accompliſh'd or genteel.

## CHAP. IV.

### *Other reflexions on this ſubject.*

IT will not be incumbent on me, after what has been ſaid in the laſt Chapter, to recount the ſubjects, and enter into the particulars of modern converſation; ſince if the topics juſt mention'd, and which ſhould naturally make ſo important a part of it, are treated with ſuch levity, what can reaſonably be expected in all thoſe gayer aſſemblies, whoſe viſible wiſh on our firſt entrance, is that paſſionate one of *Rachael* for children, *Give us pleaſantry or we dye.*

BUT in books perhaps whoſe profeſs'd deſign is to teach and improve mankind, a very different ſpirit ought naturally to be expected: And yet it is not unreaſonable to ſay, that if all the ludicrous and bantering treatiſes were gathered together, which only this laſt age has produc'd, they

they would make a larger and more ample collection than all the ſolid and uſeful books that are now extant in the world.

If in any ſort of writings the ſedate, the rational, and candid manner ought particularly to prevail, one would think it ſhould be in thoſe, where ſome dubious points, or ſome important doctrines of our holy Religion are controverted and explain'd: And yet it is ſtrange to ſee how the venerable combatants on either ſide forſake this plain and natural path, and ſtart aſide to mirth, to levity and ridicule: How they triumph in the ſharp and ludicrous hits they give to each other, and value themſelves more on ſatyr than ſenſe, and repartee than truth; and all this too, at a time when they extol in words, and ought to copy in effect the ſweet ſimplicity of thoſe heavenly writings where there is ſcarce a ſarcaſm or jeer through the whole.

NAY, ſo deeply has this infected ſome of the greateſt Genii and the profoundeſt adepts in the Chriſtian ſchool, that it has in ſome manner forc'd them moſt unnaturally to co-operate even with Infidels themſelves; to judge that to be a dead and unactive maſs which wants piquancy againſt our brother, and to fall into or feign a ſpirit of ſlumber over unpointed candour, moderation, and truth; in ſhort, to pervert the juſt courſe and order of things, and pronounce that only to be excellent, of which we ſhould be aſhamed, as inconſiſtent with our dignity and unbecoming our profeſſion.

BUT if this ſpirit prevails in books which relate to the ſerious and important affairs of heaven and eternity, it will be leſs wonder to ſee it prevail in others which relate only to the lower ones of this tranſitory life: It will be leſs wonder to ſee in them the Philoſopher degraded, or the Magiſtrate ſcorn'd; to ſee living kings deſcend with levity from their

thrones, and dead ones inſulted with every poſſible circumſtance of infamy and deriſion.

LET it not therefore be ſaid by way of objection to the propriety of the juſt mention'd obſervations, as a proof of the preſent point, that the ſo much celebrated *Odium Theologicum* is the true parent of that banter which Divines not only of different ſects but the ſame, are apt to laviſh on each other: If hatred ſhould be thought to be the parent of ridicule, we have variety of it enough; we have Atheiſtical hatred as well as religious, and Civil hatred as well as Eccleſiaſtical; we have legal hatred, and medical hatred, philoſophical hatred, and theatrical hatred; we have hatred in camps, in courts, in ſenates, and in ſchools; nay, we have hatred on points that ſeem unintereſting to mankind, that lie hid in the darkneſs of the moſt remote antiquity, or in regions beyond the planetary world: But this indeed is not the caſe; ridicule is often found where hatred

is

is not, and where they are join'd, ridicule is oftener itſelf the parent than the offſpring; and when we enquire into it's ſources, we ſhall find them almoſt as multiform as the ſcenes it engages in, or the colours it puts on.

I will not ſink the dignity of this diſcourſe by deſcending to thoſe low and infamous pamphlets, and to thoſe ſubſidiary aids of picture and print, with which this Iſland abounds; which as they deſerve no eſteem, ſo they certainly could gain no credit, except amongſt a people where this rage of banter ſo univerſally prevails.

CREDIT did I ſay? nay, ſurely amongſt a more ſober and ſerious people they could not well gain admiſſion on ſuch happy revolutions, and ſuch ſignal calamities, as were *both* diſgrac'd by their ludicrous repreſentations; being in the one caſe unſuitable to that expanded heart, and that elevated joy which become as it were the birth-day of the ſtate; and in the other caſe

caſe inconſiſtent with that pathos and concern, with which we ſhould weep over the diſaſters of our country, and it's approaches to decay.

PERMIT me therefore to cloſe this head with a freſh proof of it's truth ariſing from daily obſervation, which is, that *that* book ſtands without exception the faireſt for the full tribute of modern applauſe, which on the moſt ſerious ſubjects can keep up our ſpirits, or diſpel our ſpleen; which is either able to cauſe in us certain burſts of merriment at thoſe gloomier pauſes where it was leaſt to be expected; or, which is beſt, can keep up a ſort of under laugh, which is to ſneer thro' the gravity and ſolemnity of the whole.

AND in this liſt ſtands foremoſt with immortal honours that Reverend* yet facetious Author, whoſe writings are ſo multifarious, that one uniform laugh was in a manner hopeleſs and impoſſible; yet ſo

* *Swift.*

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ſucceſsful has he been in the choice of his ſubjects; and where his ſubjects fail'd, in the oddity of his manner, that by treating of farce as he ſhould of religion, and of religion as he ſhould of farce, he reigns at preſent without an equal in the hearts of the admiring world.

BUT though his equals are few, his rivals are numerous, and his followers at leaſt in his defects are infinite; almoſt every one would aſpire to the laudable ambition of diverting his readers, even on thoſe grave occaſions, when the diverſion is as abſurd as the dancing of the Magiſtrate in the * Poet's expreſſion,

*To ſhew his Brawn.* ———

I can ſelect no mirror more proper to ſhew this truth in than the vague performances of thoſe monthly retailers of learning in the preſent times, who having ſucceeded to an honourable profeſſion, have

* *Otway.*

not

not dignity enough to ſupport it; but find that defect moſt amply made up by ſuch ſallies of mirth, and effuſions of banter as ſuit with the faſhionable and prevailing taſte.

*Bayle*, who was amongſt the firſt authors of this claſs was, as all great minds are, ſo inclin'd to candor, that he was rightly judg'd to be in ſome degree exceſſive on that head; ſo that thoſe who follow'd were oblig'd to add ſome ſort of *ſtimulus* to their examinations, but ſtill inclin'd to the favourable ſide: In the next generation there was yet a greater liberty taken with books and authors, but ſtill when it was the greateſt, their conduct ſeem'd to be impartial, and their reflexions juſt; at leaſt they are always deliver'd, as they ought; with ſuitable gravity, decency, and reſpect.

BUT with their preſent ſucceſſors, unmerited cenſure ſarcaſm and jeſt have paſs'd all bounds; and neither learning, nor dignity, neither age, nor ſex have paſs'd untouch'd through thoſe fires, which are lighted

lighted up to divert, and not to illumine this frolicſome generation.

THERE is one thing yet which ought not to be omitted, becauſe it looks as direct on the point we are maintaining, as any thing that has hitherto been advanced.

THAT famous diſpute about the Superiority of ancient and modern Learning is at preſent ſubſided, and the Truth ſtruck out from the contending parties ſeems to be this, that in the art of reaſoning and the advancement of Science the moderns excel, but in the works of Genius they are out-done.

NOW whether the arts of writing on the ſeveral ſpecies of ridicule, and more eſpecially burleſque, belong to this latter claſs is a point of no conſequence to the preſent undertaking: But that we are ſuperior to the Ancients in theſe is ſo indiſputably clear, that they have in a manner nothing to compare with us on this head.

BUT

BUT to what this can be owing, except to our turning our thoughts more to theſe trivial arts, and of conſequence to our being more converſant and ſkilful in them all, I own myſelf at a loſs to determine.

IF we purſue this argument farther from the view of the different ſituation of the ancients and moderns in regard to religion, it will receive a conſiderable degree of force.

THE religion of the former could never in all appearance have preſerv'd it's dignity, nor kept up any proper degree of ſeriouſneſs and decency in it's votaries, when it admitted ſuch a multiplicity of mean and contemptible gods; when it ſuppos'd that the ſupreme Deity with his council call'd *Conſentes*, were not able to regulate the affairs of the univerſe without tutelary gods, houſhold gods, genial gods, and country gods; — without fauns, ſylvans, ſatyrs, lemures; — without nymphs, naiades, ſyrens, nereides; — without winds, tempeſts,

peſts, animals, vegetables; — without impudence, calumny, fear, diſeaſe; in ſhort, without ſuch a number of gods, as made *Atlas* himſelf in the expreſſion of *Juvenal*, almoſt ſink beneath his burthen; and made a * modern cry out with zealous indignation, that almoſt every thing was God, but God himſelf.

AND then as to the modes of propitiating, adoring, and ſerving them, they were altogether of a piece with the Deities themſelves; and we know from the Pagan writings, that all was wanton or irregular *there*; that they even encouraged ſuperſtitious and idle fooleries on ſome occaſions, which they were aſham'd of on others; that drunkenneſs and immodeſty which are the ſcandal of the human nature, were thought by them not improper tributes to the Divine; that they allow'd men to be vitious in honour of the gods; that they made uſe of the interceſſions of their

* *Boſſuet.*

cour-

courteſans to *Venus* on diſtreſsful occaſions, and attributed their deliverance to a race of proſtitutes, who were fitter to bring down the vengeance of heaven, than to avert it.

I need not contraſt our principles and practice with the ſcandalous ones juſt mention'd: For what compariſon can there ever be between the frailties of *Jupiter*, and the perfections of JEHOVAH; — between the heathen ſhews and the Goſpel ſimplicity; — between the jolly precepts their lawgivers deliver'd, and the ſevere doctrines of mortification and ſelf-denyal; — between the mirth and feſtivities of the Pagan worſhip, and the ſerioufneſs and ſolemnity of the Chriſtian; — between, in ſhort, the purification of the heart, which in the one caſe, was effected with a little ſalt and water; in the other muſt be attain'd by the ſtrongeſt reſolutions, and moſt laborious endeavours?

In a word, conſidering how intimately all religion muſt mingle itſelf with human tranſactions, it ſeems altogether as difficult for the antients to be ſerious under the influence of idolatry, as it is for Chriſtians to be light under the influence of the Goſpel: — But the reverſe has happen'd: And to bring about this reverſe, there muſt be ſome latent and peculiar cauſes, in the enumeration of which the effect will ſtill more viſibly appear.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the cauſes of our Ridicule.*

HAVING already ſhewn that one of the predominant and characteriſtic qualities of the preſent age, and eſpecially in this iſland, is an immoderate paſſion for ridicule; I come now to enquire into it's cauſes, and enumerate it's bad conſequences, from both which the exiſtence of this quality will more viſibly appear.

NOW the firſt of the cauſes that I ſhall here mention is the Reformation of Religion, which by laying open the follies and impoſtures of Popery, ſuddenly increas'd the powers of ridicule, and added mightily to it's ſtock of ludicrous images, and fantaſtic repreſentations.

AND this addition was ſo much the more conſiderable, as Popery had in a manner uſurp'd the dominion over the Chriſtian world, and had the moſt extenſive

influence over all occurrences both public and private.

MANY indeed of the frauds and weakneſſes of this religion were known to it's own profeſſors before: but then theſe profeſſors were few in number, and of thoſe few ſcarce any one durſt laugh at defects, which it was even dangerous to ſee.

BUT afterwards when this knowledge came to be more general, and theſe reſtraints were altogether taken off, then was pour'd forth ſo full a torrent of ſatyr and ridicule, that there are few or none of the ſarcaſtic tribe who have not aided their invention, and pointed their invective with the Popiſh vices.

BUT beſide this addition to the ſtores of ridicule, it was increas'd likewiſe in it's keenneſs, authoriz'd in it's rage, and provok'd as it were to exceſs by the mortifying conſideration, that ſo great a part of mankind had been dupes to lazy and illiterate drones; and dupes too in a matter

that

that moſt of all concern'd them, their eternal Salvation.

ADD ſtill, that when whole communities of Proteſtants were afterwards form'd, and thereby nations became enemies to each other, theſe follies were increas'd beyond their original ſize, and made by their groteſque and gigantic appearance ten-fold more ridiculous than they ſhould naturally have been.

BUT theſe were not the only conſequences of this remarkable event; the Proteſtants, by carrying their religion to ſuch unjuſtifiable exceſs, by ſplitting into ſuch numerous and whimſical ſects, by ſuch affected ſingularities in their principles, and carriage; and above all, by ſuch contorſions and grimace in their acts of devotion, enabled the Papiſts to take ample revenge, and retort their arrows with ſingular ſucceſs.

THE event therefore has been, that both parties are often moſt juſtly become ridiculous by the ſame exceſſes; and from

this double ſtore-houſe of inexhauſted banter have been derived ſome of the beſt pieces of the ludicrous kind both in verſe and proſe that theſe latter ages have produc'd.

BUT ſecondly: Another cauſe of the prevalency of this humour, and not unfrequently the conſequence of the two former, is total Infidelity.

AND this has ſtill ſo enlarg'd the ſphere of ridicule, that while the original Proteſtant laughs at the Catholic, the Catholic at the Proteſtant, and both at the Fanatic; the Infidel laughs at all.

HOW unjuſtly has been intimated before, and will be more fully inſiſted on in the third part of theſe diſcourſes; and therefore it will excuſe me here from enlarging farther on this head.

ANOTHER cauſe of this, and that a very conſiderable one to this kingdom, was the Reſtoration: In which was ſeen a full and pregnant inſtance of the truth of that frequent obſervation, that one extreme

treme is often naturally productive of another.

THAT ſour and moroſe diſpoſition, that ſtiff and puritanical conduct, that viſage cover'd over with the clouds of ſuperſtition, and that converſation devoid of gaiety and grace, join'd all to the conſideration of thoſe dreadful calamities, which the men of this Caſt were ſuppos'd to bring on: all this I ſay gave the nation ſuch an abhorrence of their manners, that it ſoon began to incline to the contrary extreme; and this likewiſe being aided by thoſe overflowings of joy, and thoſe tumults of debauchery which are common to great and ſignal deliverances; and what is worſe ſtill, all this being ſupported by the example of the monarch and his court during the courſe of a long and profligate reign, it in effect chang'd the whole frame of the people, and made their exceſſes of laughter altogether as offenſive, as the diſguſting ſeverity they had ſo juſtly rejected.

AND from this Æra is to be dated chiefly that ſport with the enſigns of the Magiſtrate and the Prelate; thoſe effuſions of ridicule on the Stateſman and the Miniſter; thoſe ſcoffs at virtue, which belong only to hypocriſy; and thoſe inſults on Religion, which belong only to ſuperſtition.

ANOTHER cauſe yet, as we have wantonly made it, is the Revolution and Acceſſion, and in conſequence of both, the continuance of faction after it's natural diſſolution.

IN other nations when their diviſions are remov'd, they are either bury'd as ſoon as poſſible in eternal oblivion, or improv'd to advantage by ſerious recollection: But with us their *manes* are invok'd, as it were for ſport; we are forc'd to trifle with names inſtead of things, and look out for vain and imaginary diſtinctions, when real ones are no more.

ON this plan therefore it is no wonder to find the ridicule pour in on every ſide: Thus if the rights of the church are plead-

ed

ed for, the ſmile begins; if we inſiſt on it's danger, the laugh breaks out: If *old* appellations are kept up, they are often ſo ludicrouſly inverted, that the Whig becomes a favourer of regal prerogative, the Tory of popular liberty; and if we divide into *new* ones, they are often ſo egregiouſly fantaſtic, that many call themſelves promoters of their country's welfare, when that welfare is tyranny; and others call themſelves defenders of the preſent conſtitution, when that defence is corruption. — In a former age we were taught in our prayers to look with horror, and call out for judgment on ſuch workers of iniquity, as turn religion into rebellion, and faith into faction: In the preſent, that indignation is often turn'd into laughter at the ſame dangerous ſpirits, who turn devotion into mockery, and oaths into grimace; who think it but a jeſt to trifle with their Maker, and pray with the mouth for one prince, and with the heart for another.

In ſoberer nations, when an acceſſion is ſometimes made to the mother country, it's inhabitants are for the moſt part receiv'd with that eſteem, and cheriſh'd with that affection which their characters might deſerve, or their uſefulneſs to the State entitle them to: In our's, they are treated with that levity and contempt which are peculiar to a ſcornful and inſolent people; nor is it uncommon with us to laviſh on them opprobrious diſtinctions, and burleſque appellations for thoſe very qualities which render them better than ourſelves.

In ſhort, ſince the Revolution diſſimulation and artifice have gone thro' the land, and a ſpirit of irony has infected converſation, and given ludicrous and ambiguous meanings to the moſt important things: When the King is mention'd, he is both Proteſtant and Catholic; when the Church, it is independent, and a creature of the State; the Orthodox Divine is a perſecutor and ſaint; the Heterodox is at once a champion for truth, and a child of hell:

Our *German* Brethren are both defenders and plunderers; our foreign Invaders both enemies and friends: Famous Univerſities are fountains of loyalty, and nurſeries of ſedition; and numerous Armies are generous ſpirits that protect, and red locuſts that eat us up.

ANOTHER cauſe is contain'd in the following remark of an excellent * Writer, whoſe ſingular ſagacity in human things no one will controvert: His words are theſe — "A people of intrepid ſpirit require ſpectacles full of danger; a hot fiery people are for bloodſhed and battles; a voluptuous nation wants muſic and dancing; a polite people require gallantry and love; and a trifling people are for mirth and Ridicule."

I do not know whether I ſhall comment agreeably to the Author's ſentiments on the latter part of his obſervation, but the comment however may be warranted by reaſon,

* *Rouſſeau.*

when

when I ſay, that as all men, notwithſtanding their miſpence of time, or want of intellectual accompliſhments, always wiſh to appear conſiderable, and often think that they really are ſo; the conſequence is, that they will frequently be inclined to laugh at what they do not underſtand, and what they want induſtry and application to ſearch to the bottom.

AND this is ſo true, that the effect is general, uniform and conſtant, not only among men of the ſame profeſſion, but different. It is as certain that the Rhymer will ſneer at the Poet, as it is that the one can but creep, while the other ſoars; and the Dunces in Medicine, in Divinity and Law, are as ſure to endeavour to bring down others to their own inſignificant level, as they are to be actuated by the prejudices and paſſions of vulgar minds.

THUS ſtands the caſe with the Triflers in regard to the Adepts in the ſame profeſſion; and their treatment of thoſe in different ones is not much unlike: The extenſion

tenſion of learning by proper aids and compendious methods has given moſt people that read a ſhort inſight into it's ſeveral parts: This illumination, together with the natural partiality to their own departments, and a total neglect of proper enquiry, make them forward to laugh as the circumſtances may require, and pronounce without heſitation the Pleader to be a Coxcomb, the Critic a Pedant, the Bard to be a Viſionary, and the Mathematician a Block.

I could, if it was proper, confirm this reaſoning by living examples in every profeſſion, and in almoſt every place where the ſpirit of this vice can be ſuppos'd to exiſt: But as the taſk will be invidious without being neceſſary, I ſhould hope that by aſſigning this in general for one of the many cauſes of the propenſity to Ridicule among the People of this Iſland, no one can cenſure me as accuſing them unjuſtly.

I paſs

I paſs on therefore to the Sixth cauſe; which is a general diffuſion of knowledge, and improvement of the underſtanding.

EVERY degree of banter muſt generally take it's riſe from, or at leaſt be ſupported by ſome real, or imagin'd ſuperiority in one point, or more; for the moſt part this is the ſuperiority of the underſtanding, and the gradations of it are almoſt infinite, extending thro' the material and immaterial world, and is as fondly claim'd on the knowledge of a Ribband, as the diſcovery of the ſolar Syſtem.

INDEED it muſt be own'd that the contrary of this ſeems frequently to happen in vulgar life, when the moſt groſs and brutal ignorance expreſſes both it's ſurprize at, and contempt of things which have not come within it's view, and are above it's capacity: — But this is not the ſpecies of laughter which is here conſider'd; this not being the ſmile of intellect, but the burſt of folly; not the look of ſcorn, but the ſtare of wonder.

ON

ON this plan then it muſt be obſerv'd, that when learning was confin'd to a few, and thoſe few were combin'd in one common cauſe, as it happen'd before the reſtoration of letters, they would find but rare opportunities of ridicule among themſelves, and would think it beneath their dignity to draw it out againſt others, whom they conſider'd as beings of an inferior claſs, and who were only to be kept in awe.

BUT afterwards, when this learning became more general, and the ſeveral ranks and claſſes of men had frequent differences with each other, then were the opportunities multiply'd of diſcovering their mutual failings and incongruities, and their knowledge and abilities would be employ'd to ſet them in the moſt ludicrous light.

ADD ſtill to this, that as learning was branch'd out into a variety of particular arts; and each of them had it's reſpective votaries, who were attach'd to them with ſuch zeal as to deſpiſe the reſt; this conſtituted another fund of ridicule, from whence

whence has proceeded another ſtock of as humorous and ſarcaſtic pieces as theſe times have ſeen.

A Seventh cauſe is the Politeneſs and Urbanity, and with them the deceitfulneſs and hypocriſy of modern converſation. On theſe accounts men are eaſily brought together, and have not that horror of intermixing which prevails over the ruſtic and unpoliſh'd heart; they treat each other with civility, with decency and reſpect, even when diſlike, deteſtation and contempt are on all ſides reciprocal; and by this means they view, as in a faithful mirror, the ridiculous inconſiſtencies and incongruities of conduct, and of which this general hypocriſy ſeldom fails to be one.

NAY, a man muſt have a greater portion of ſerioufneſs than is common to theſe times, who can even hold his countenance while that converſation is carrying on, and that ſolemn farce tranſacting, in which (as the good Biſhop expreſſes it) "We hear daily

daily what ſolemn expreſſions of reſpect and kindneſs will paſs between men almoſt upon no occaſion, and no neceſſity; how great honour and eſteem they will declare for one, whom perhaps they never heard of or ſaw before; how entirely of a ſudden they are devoted to his ſervice and intereſt for no reaſon; how infinitely and eternally they are oblig'd to him for no benefit; and how extremely concern'd for him, nay, and afflicted too, for no cauſe*."

AN Eighth cauſe is extended Commerce, and with it it's ſure concomitant Luxury: Hence new modes, new habiliments, new ornaments, and new viands: — Hence ſtrange men, ſtrange animals, ſtrange countries, and ſtrange diſcoveries; and as all theſe are by turns expoſed to view, and become the ſubjects of converſation, they improve the fancy, and enable it to ſtrike out thoſe ſparks of banter, which had otherwiſe ſlept for want of matter.

* *Tillotſon.*

BUT luxury goes farther yet: Of all the various ſpecies of ridicule there is ſcarce one that teems with greater abſurdities, or whoſe abſurdity is more generally felt, than that real or ſeeming change of character which luxury brings on, when by dreſs, by manners, or converſation, by emulation, vanity, or any other of it's numerous incentives, it makes men inſenſibly and whimſically ſlide into thoſe oppoſite departments for which they are unfit, and to which they do not belong.

NAY, the firſt of theſe only is of ſo great extent, that the true burleſque in writing does frequently ariſe from only a change of attire: And the moſt venerable Poets, and the moſt ſeraphic Genii, have then become the moſt exquiſitely ridiculous, when their ſentiments are expreſs'd in different language, and their images dreſs'd up in a different garb.

THIS likewiſe is one of the chief cauſes of the diverſion ariſing from that child of luxury in opulent nations, the Maſquerade:

But

But this effect is trivial in compariſon of that more extenſive and general maſquerade which it makes in human life.

In poorer and more temperate nations their manners are more uniform, and their characters conſiſtent; their track is regular, and their deviations from it are rare: — In luxurious ones all is diſorderly and confuſed; antipathies are reconcil'd, and oppoſitions meet; the Noble and Mechanic are jumbled together; and men are often found to value themſelves on thoſe very qualities, which are a diſgrace to their profeſſion: The Soldier becomes finical, and the Divine voluptuous; the Magiſtrate becomes frolicſome, and the Philoſopher gay. Nor is that ſtrange metamorphoſis never beheld, when by fantaſtic garbs, and extravagant manners, the men are changed into women, and the women into men.

Add ſtill to this, that it is the property of luxury, and with it of elegance and refinement, never to be contented with what is natural and common; that it puts men

upon ſingular and fanciful inventions; that it is it's buſineſs to cauſe merriment both in ſeaſon and out; that nothing is ſacred, while that point is in view; that it will extract ridicule from the moſt unpromiſing ſubjects; that it will even draw out Fiends for the diverſion of the mob, and give Death the air and manners of a * Beaux.

A Ninth cauſe is our Fondneſs for imitating our airy Neighbours in moſt of their cuſtoms: This imitation, when it is perfect, makes us light; when it is imperfect, makes us ridiculous: In the Firſt caſe we ſeek for all occaſions of ridicule; in the laſt we really afford it in ourſelves: And to ſuch a height is this rage of imitation now arriv'd, that it is among the worſt ſymptoms of declining Patriotiſm to ſee it prevail not only in our dreſſes, and diverſions, our converſation, and our writing; but not unfrequently in our unnatural wiſhes for their Government and Conſtitution.

* See *Swift*'s poem on Death going a courting.

A Tenth cauſe may poſſibly be a frequent and prevailing Mixture with ſome of the ſouthern nations: Hence the general turn and conſtitution of the people becomes gradually alter'd; approaches nearer to the fire, the fancy and conceits of the more volatiliz'd inhabitants of the warmer regions; and becomes farther remov'd from that phlegmatic habit, and that ſerious diſpoſition for which the northern nations have ever been remarkable.

It ſhould ſeem from this laſt cauſe, that in point of habit or conſtitution, a particular always of force, that our neighbouring nation is ſuperior to us on this head: Which indeed is true, and I heartily wiſh that they were equally ſuperior to us on every other; but this the two remaining cauſes of more general extent and fatal influence forbid: Theſe are great liberty and great corruption.

By the firſt of theſe, we exhibit the utmoſt variety of ſingular and fantaſtic characters, as well as give an unbounded

looſe to all the moſt licentious ſatyr, and outrageous burleſque on every thing ſerious and ſolemn: By the laſt, we have been often ſo groſſly deluded, and ſo ſcandalouſly abus'd, that we *laugh out* at all pretenſions for the reſtoration of virtue, and can ſcarce think that Declaimer in his ſenſes, who can once ſuppoſe that there are any remains of Patriotiſm in this abandon'd Iſle.

AND now putting all theſe cauſes together, I think we may ſay with great juſtice, that they do not all concur with ſuch united influence on any one nation, as ourſelves: If there is any exception, it ſhould ſeem to be that of our inveterate enemy: But they have neither the opportunity of beholding ſuch a multiplicity of ludicrous objects, nor the liberty of expoſing them, if they had: Their obliquities muſt be ſtraitned, and reduc'd; their effuſions muſt be check'd and reſtrain'd; — their railleries on the Great muſt be decent and ſoft; their reflexions on the State muſt

be

be temperate and grave; — their fanaticiſm muſt be ſecret and conceal'd; their infidelity muſt be ſilent and obſcure: — And then as to Corruption, the very name is in ſome ſort an empty ſound, where all things are ſubſervient to the commands of one; and it can only have it's full and proper meaning in thoſe lands of liberty, where a free-born people is to be bought and ſold.

THIS train of reaſoning may with great propriety be apply'd to all thoſe *European* nations, who are in any degree conſiderable for the exertion of ridicule, but are ſtill under the influence of arbitrary ſway. — There is one nation indeed, who on the whole have the ſame or greater degree of liberty than ourſelves; but happily they have not the powers of abuſing it ſo much in the preſent caſe, or at leaſt of turning it into ſo deſtructive an engine to manners and ſociety. Not that this is owing to it's Magiſtrates and Governors, who having bent their principal care againſt it's efforts

on the State, have made them more impetuous on the ſide of religion; for in this they are like ſhort-ſighted and unſkilful Lawgivers, who ſhut up a ſmall avenue againſt the inundation of vice, and leave open a greater.

BUT the truth of it is, that nature has preſcribed limits to it's pernicious qualities where the Magiſtrate has not; and while on the one hand the utmoſt freedom of indulging it is allow'd, on the other hand ſucceſs and excellence in it is deny'd: When fit ſubjects for it are offer'd, true talents for it are wanting; and when the Occaſion is fair, the Genius is dull.

'TIS upon this account that their ridicule does for the moſt part appear in ſuch groſs conceptions, with ſuch aggravated features, and in ſuch extravagant colours, that tho' it may touch perhaps the fancy of ſome congenial Peaſant; yet it is more apt to diſguſt thoſe elevated Characters and thoſe liberal minds, whoſe province it is to take

take the lead in Society, and give example to Mankind.

In effect, every thing puſh'd far beyond it's natural bounds muſt loſe it's influence, it's dignity, and weight: — The requeſt that becomes exorbitant is ſcarce ſo much as heard, which with proper abatements would readily have been granted; and that puniſhment which when equitable and moderate would intimidate and reſtrain, is totally diſregarded when abſurdly extended beyond all poſſible proportion to the nature of the offence: In like manner, that ridicule which is elegant and fine may creep inſenſibly on the mind, and ſpread contagion thro' ſociety, while that which is extravagant ſinks at once into contempt; or is receiv'd with the indignation which it juſtly deſerves.

But if any one after all that has been ſaid ſhall ſtill object, that poſſibly there may yet ſome nation be found, that upon a ſtrict enquiry ſhall be more ludicrous than our own; it is not my buſineſs to confute him:

him: I am not ſo much contending for any ſuperiority of our countrymen in this faſhionable vice, as for it's total rejection in all thoſe graver concerns with which it does not rightly conſiſt: And I ſhould think that there are few who do not ſee enough of it in theſe points to be the ſubject of complaint, and of our ſincereſt wiſhes to ſee it finally extinguiſh'd.

ON the whole therefore we may conclude, that one of the predominant and characteriſtic qualities of the preſent age is a paſſion for ridicule; but it may yet perhaps be aſk'd, why it is ſo much to be condemn'd? and where is it's malignant influence either on Individuals or the State? Now tho' many of it's bad Effects have been mention'd before, yet in order to it's full proſcription, it may become us to be more particular.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the ill effects of Ridicule, which affect Society more remotely.*

I Shall not I think be contradicted by the moſt ſanguine admirers of ridicule, in relation to the Firſt ill effect of the many which I am about to recount, tho' without any ſettled or regular order: This bad effect is the great diſcouragement modeſt men are forc'd to undergo on this account, whoſe ardor is thereby repreſs'd, and whoſe courage is abated for ſuch uſeful attempts to themſelves, and their dependants, as are properly within their ſphere.

A good opinion of their own qualifications is ſo inherent in all mankind, that they will part with any thing ſooner than that; and would by all means appear as conſiderable in the eyes of the world, as they do in their own: Hence it is that they cannot eaſily bear to have their good qualities reflected on; and becauſe all laughter and

and ridicule tend to vilify and under-value thoſe good qualities, hence 'tis that Men ſo univerſally abhor it: And it is juſtly obſerv'd, that as nothing is ſo provoking and irkſome as ſatyr to the mind of man in general, ſo nothing is a more extenſive puniſhment than this ſpecies of it in particular.

MEN moſt fierce in their natures, and moſt barbarous in their manners, moſt haughty in their tempers, and moſt inſolent in their conduct; moſt harden'd in their vices, and moſt reſolute in their proceedings, are ſtill found ſenſible of the ſhame of being laugh'd at; have yielded to reproach, when they ſpurn'd at advice; and tamely permitted the Stage to finiſh, what the Pulpit ineffectually began.

SUCH then being the nature and efficacy of banter, how greatly muſt it affect and diſturb the undeſerving? how muſt it ſhock the candid mind, and ingenuous diſpoſition? and where is the modeſty that will not bend to the force of ſo powerful a principle?

principle? which is like ſome of the nobleſt ſpecifics and remedies in nature; when wrong apply'd, or profuſely given, they prove dangerous, and deſtructive.

WHAT is here obſerv'd is to be underſtood chiefly of men's abilities; but it is as true likewiſe of their integrity: And few are the inſtances of the moſt noble minds, who do not ſlacken in the purſuits of virtue, or ſtop ſhort at once in the career of honour, when treated with contempt, or expos'd to laughter for the moſt generous undertakings.

THE practice of duelling, for which modern times have been ſcandalouſly diſtinguiſh'd, is a full proof of the truth of this point; a practice which at the ſame time that every good man condemns, he is in a manner forc'd to admit; and rather than be expos'd to the ſtings of ſcorn, and hiſſes of infamy, he breaks at once through every reſtraint of reaſon, humanity, and religion.

BUT

BUT if ſuch be the power and efficacy of ſhame, that even when it is undeſerv'd, it can force the virtuous to ruſh upon thoſe fierce and bloody contentions, which the very beſt laws, and religion condemn; no wonder that they ſhould feel it's more extenſive influence in thoſe milder tryals, where it is only requir'd of them to fall-in decently with the reputable vices, and to be corrupt or diſſolute with the ſtream of example, and faſhion of the times.

AND how many victims of this ſort have been offer'd in this land to the ſhrine of corruption, let the ſlackened nerves and disjointed frame of our conſtitution teſtify; which could not have exhibited ſo melancholy a ſpectacle, if many of it's members had been able to bear up againſt the dread of ſingularity, and the vain reproaches of being *righteous over-much*..

BUT Secondly: Another ill conſequence of this fault, and what all have complain'd of, is the Separation of Friends.

THE ſcornful reflexions of an enemy affect us but little, as it was no more than we expected: — Thoſe of people indifferent to us, we can eaſily impute to the want of knowing our worth: — Thoſe of our common acquaintance, we can readily retort, or ſoon forget: — But thoſe of our friends are deep and deadly wounds. Being ſenſible of warm and endearing ſentiments on our own part, we expect the ſame on their's; but inſtead of this, to meet with it's contrary, is that ſingularly cruel and aggravated diſappointment, which our Saviour mentions in a ſimilar caſe, of receiving a ſerpent for an egg, and a ſcorpion for a fiſh.

NEITHER does this diſappointment principally ariſe from the ſuperiority of merit or diſtinction, which by this means the ſcorner ſeems to claim to himſelf above his friend: — The equality of friendſhip does not conſiſt in this, but in ſomething much more delicate and refin'd; in the ſame affections, not the ſame wiſdom; in the

the ſame will, not the ſame capacity; in the ſame large and benevolent ſentiments, not the ſame magnificent titles, or earthly poſſeſſions: — In this inequality therefore of conditions between friends, if the one ſhould command, it would not be like an imperious maſter, but like an indulgent Parent; if the other ſhould obey, it would not be like a reluctant ſlave, but like one that took a pleaſure in doing his duty:—If the one had a greater ſhare of worldly goods, it would not make him oppreſſive to the poorer: if the other had a leſs, it would not make him uneaſy at the defect, and envy the richer: if the one ſhould direct and inform, it would not be with any conſcious pride of ſuperior abilities; if the other ſhould be inſtructed and taught, it would not be with any ſenſe of ſhame, as proceeding from ignorance: — In ſhort, while they were thus happily join'd in will and affection, they might take the ſame pleaſure in commanding and obeying; it might be the ſame thing who inſtructed or

was

was taught; and there might be no difference in riches or poverty.

WHEN indeed this ſuperiority was claim'd in ſuch conditions where this inequality could not poſſibly ſubſiſt, it would have ſome tendency to alienate the affections; when it was claim'd in an haughty manner, it would have a greater; when beſides this, it tended to depreciate the good qualities of a friend, it would have a greater ſtill: But that which would moſt effectually eſtrange the heart, and altogether diſſolve the union, would be to do all this with a profuſion of banter, and a conſtant indiſcriminating uſe of wanton jeſt, and ſcornful reflexion.

FOR this would not only have all the force juſt mention'd to ſink his credit, but would alſo be the moſt grievous and afflictive mortification to one, who by the very nature and obligations of friendſhip, had a right to expect very different returns; ſo that from henceforward he would rather chooſe to encounter the greateſt and moſt

formidable difficulties, and even wear out his days in ſolitude and pain, than be ſubject to the moſt bitter and poignant reflexions that generous minds can endure.

BUT it is not always in ſecret pain and ſilent mortification, that theſe inſults have ended: They have ſometimes been the occaſion of the greateſt commotions and diſtractions in the State, as well as thoſe between individuals and families: Nor is it rare to obſerve in the hiſtory of the world, that great armies have been ſubdued, and whole kingdoms ſubverted by weak and even deſpicable enemies, when thoſe who watch'd over them, were by one ſcornful reflexion made enemies to each other.

So dangerous is the indulgence of this faſhionable crime, that even in caſes, where by the very nature of them it ſhould be limited and confin'd, it proceeds ſometimes to unforeſeen and inconceivable extent; and though it ſeems to begin only in private conteſt, and perſonal diſlike, is found

found fatally to end in public diſcord, and general confuſion.

BUT though this laſt ſtate of things ſhould not often be found to proceed from this cauſe, yet another that is ſomewhat ſimilar to, and may ſometimes end in it, certainly does: And that is a general Want of Confidence between man and man.

THE beſt and trueſt foundation of mutual confidence is a correſpondence and converſation upon equal terms: All claims of ſuperior abilities tend to ſubvert this foundation; and all ridicule is the moſt provoking exertion of this ſuperiority.

BUT this is not the worſt: In order to gain confidence, and conciliate affection, it is required of us to be open, generous, and condeſcending; eaſy to be pleas'd with common degrees of merit, and ready to overlook every human infirmity: And the reverſe of all this is found in ridicule; which is for the moſt part inſidious, malignant and overbearing; difficultly ac-

knowledging the greateſt perfections, and inſolently aggravating the failings of our nature.

AND ſo unexceptionable does this deſcription appear on the whole, that notwithſtanding the ſtrangeſt inconſiſtencies and incongruities are often diſcover'd in the conduct of men; yet I think it may be ſafely pronounc'd, that no warm and affectionate friend, no open and generous enemy, no zealous and diſintereſted Patriot, and no true and ardent lover of the human ſpecies, was ever addicted to this quality in any conſiderable degree.

LET us join to this another obſervation, which it were to be wiſh'd that thoſe addicted to this quality, did not often find by fatal experience to be too true; which is, that by the general habit of ironically deſcanting on ſerious things, they have made their characters ſo ſuſpicious and diſguſting, that they are often judg'd to be moſt in jeſt when they are moſt in earneſt; and loſe the favour and affection of men at

that

that very inſtant, and for thoſe very expreſſions, by which they intended to procure them.

BUT becauſe they who are remarkably addicted to this quality demonſtrate in all their tranſactions with their fellow-creatures, that they are not ſo ſolicitous about their confidence or favour, as about the reputation of ſuperior abilities; I will now add as another bad effect of this fault, that it tends often to darken the intellect, to vitiate the taſte; and pervert the judgment.

TO prove this, let it firſt be obſerv'd that a proper frame of mind is altogether as neceſſary in our enquiries after truth, as a clearneſs of underſtanding; nay, and that this clearneſs of underſtanding will not long remain, when the truth we are in queſt of is either diſagreeable, or contrary to our acquir'd habits, or natural diſpoſition.

WE read in Scripture of a certain rich man, who receiv'd this Eulogy from the great Diſcerner of hearts, that he was not

*far from the kingdom of God:* Yet he no ſooner heard of the levelling principle of Chriſtianity, than he ſtarted back: — Intoxicated with fantaſtic ideas of the ſplendor of his ſtate, and not bearing to ſee the diminution, or what was worſe the annihilation of it by that harſh and diſpleaſing method the Saviour of mankind propos'd, he departed as it were with regret, that his conviction was become impoſſible: He went away ſorrowful, ſays the Evangeliſt, for he had great poſſeſſions.

NEITHER is this a ſingular inſtance of the extraordinary power and dominion of wealth, and deſign'd principally to mark out one unhappy youth under the influence of a violent and unruly paſſion; but equally applicable to all the various prejudices and deluſions of men.

OF the *Jews* in general it may be obſerv'd with equal propriety as this one, that ſmitten with the prophecies of a conquering Meſſiah, and dazzled as it were with the glory of univerſal dominion, they went away

away ſorrowful; for they expected a temporal Redeemer.

OF the Heathens it may be obſerv'd, that habituated to reflexions of the majeſty of *Jupiter*, and long us'd to deſcriptions of the ſplendor and effulgence of the ſovereign being, they went away ſorrowful; for they deteſted a crucify'd God.

OF their ſtateſmen and lawgivers it may be obſerv'd, that practis'd in the frauds and artifices of religion, and inclin'd to reſolve every thing that had the air of prodigy into impoſture, they went away ſorrowful; for they deſpiſed both the miracles and pretenſions of Chriſt.

THIS is exactly the caſe with the children of ridicule: Grown light and airy, and wanton in their diſpoſitions, and accuſtom'd eſpecially to laugh at every the leaſt mention of prodigy and ſign, they become abhorrent of the proofs, and averſe to the ſerioufneſs and ſobriety of the Goſpel.

I need not go farther in the illuſtration of this point: If any one doubts it, let him but once look over the ample liſts of the Infidel claſs, and he will ſee how large a portion of them conſiſts of the ſons of banter, of frolic, and ridicule.

BUT it is not only in the moſt ſerious matters, and by contrariety of temper that they are accuſtom'd to err; there is a certain malignity generally prevalent in their turn of mind, which for the moſt part induces them to take the dark ſide of things, when the bright one is moſt probable.

AND this it does in part by perverting the ſtated and ordinary means of judging right, and forcing them in a manner to catch at concluſions rather from ſuſpicions than fact, rather from a part than the whole.

AGREEABLE to this, it can be unknown to few of ingenuous life, what teſts have been invented in theſe times of irony to try our principles, and diſcern our hearts; and that from ſome of theſe we have been partially

tially pronounc'd impoſtors both in Church and State, in ſpite both of outward appearance and inward conviction.

MORE eſpecially have theſe teſts been drawn out with ſuch peculiar levity againſt the Diſciples of Chriſt, that they have not only been rank'd with unbelievers for ſuch ſlight deviations from faith and practice, as the frame of their nature will account for; but even for their attachment to virtue, and zealous adherence to the principles of morality, as if they ſet them up in oppoſition to thoſe poſitive precepts, thoſe ritual obſervances, and thoſe venerable myſteries with which the Scriptures abound.

BUT there is a third quality yet, which has a worſe tendency in the preſent caſe, than either of the other two, and that is a conſcious Pride of imaginary Perfection.

AND this is often ſo fatal and inſurmountable a bar to the admiſſion of truth, that I ſcruple not to ſay, that in conjunction with the other qualities juſt now men-

mention'd, it will ſometimes make up as capital a defect, as even want of apprehenſion.

MANY, ſays the *Roman* Orator, would have arriv'd at wiſdom, unleſs they thought that they had already attain'd it: And there is no claſs of men in the world to whom this remark may be ſo pertinently apply'd, as to thoſe we are now conſidering.

IN every other purſuit we proceed at leaſt with ſome *ſmall* degree of diffidence; and in their judgments of mix'd and complicated caſes, every other ſort of men are not *always* without apprehenſion that ſome requiſite has been wanting.

THE man who calumniates with the boldeſt front, is not always ſo ſatisfy'd with his tale of detraction, as to warrant it's ſoundneſs in every part: The man who hates, hates often for qualities, which he knows to be eſtimable, and which a ſmall alteration of circumſtances would induce him to love: — The man who is averſe by temper to any doctrine, will generally indeed reject

reject the doctrine, but ſometimes at leaſt may ſuſpect his heart: — But the man who laughs at the moſt ſerious truths, adds to this averſion ſuch a ſecret complacency in, and ſuch a confident approbation of his conduct, as to preclude at once all hopes from remonſtrance, and ſhut up every avenue to conviction.

For who ſhall pretend to dictate to one whoſe notices are ſo full? or who ſhall preſume to irradiate that luminous underſtanding, which values itſelf on the diſcovery of ſuch errors and defects, as had hitherto been conceal'd in perpetual night, and eſcap'd the ſearch of the moſt penetrating Genius, and the moſt exalted Capacity?

And that this is ſo appears not only from many doubtful and queſtionable characters; not only from unfortunate though well-conducted exploits; but from real virtues and exalted qualities, over which the falſe and deceitful colours of ridicule have once been thrown; which from that moment

ment have become deſperate in the eye of ſcorn, and their nature has been firmly and irrevocably fix'd, like the ſkin of *that* African, or the ſpots of *that* Leopard, which we are well aſſured that no efforts can change, and no art can waſh away.

I could eaſily bring inſtances from numerous points of doctrine, of conjecture and fact, where the three-fold impediment juſt now inſiſted on has expos'd the ſcorner to ſuch egregious abſurdity, as to make him ridiculous even in that eye of candour which would turn away from the ſight: But I may be excus'd this taſk, as they will all appear credible from the following juſt, tho' perhaps uncommon obſervation.

It ſhould naturally be expected, that if ever the ſons of ridicule were more than ordinarily ſagacious, it ſhould be in underſtanding the hints, interpreting the looks, and penetrating into the breaſts of their own fraternity; and yet by putting them on a wrong ſcent, it often miſleads them

even

even here; and he muſt be a ſtranger to this tribe, or at leaſt regardleſs of their myſteries, who has not often ſeen them puzzled by perſpicuity, and duped by their own ſuſpicions, even in their ordinary converſation.

IT is indeed as impoſſible for the mind to be always lightly diſpos'd, as it is for the outward viſage to be always upon the ſneer; yet as the ſeriouſneſs of the countenance may well comport with the deepeſt ridicule, and thoſe of this claſs are always diſpos'd to ſuſpect it; hence ariſe thoſe numerous miſconceptions, which expoſe them in their turns to the moſt deſerv'd contempt, and afford perhaps a juſter ſubject of more genuin banter, than any that they can draw from their exhauſtleſs ſtock.

BUT if this be the caſe, as it really is, with the mutual interpretation of their fantaſtic jargon, it will be leſs wonder to find them as pleaſantly miſtaken in the common buſineſs of mankind; and we can

more eaſily admit, what is indeed moſt true, that there have been numerous inſtances both in ſpeaking and writing of one plain and artleſs deſign, which the ſimple and ingenuous of lower Intellects could readily comprehend, and which by an overreach of cunning, they have ſo ſtrangely perverted, as to judge praiſe to be ſatyr, and ſatyr to be praiſe.

It is indeed in the firſt particular that their miſtakes are moſt common, as *there* ridicule acts with augmented force, and with the united influence of it's predominant qualities; for as it's malignity prevents them from readily conceiving that there can be any uncommon degree of merit in the world, ſo it's ſuſpicion makes them backward in believing that any Panegyric on it can be ſincere.

Of this ſuſpicion, a quality generally inherent in ridicule, and of the vitiated taſte which it always brings on, I ſhould incline perhaps to ſay more, if the idle miſtakes and falſe judgment of a few individuals

were not altogether inſignificant, in compariſon of the very bad effects it brings on Society.

I will therefore ſhut up this topic with a reflexion that being before made on the whole people, muſt be equally true of Individuals: The reflexion is, that in general idleneſs is often the true Parent of Ridicule; on which account the men we are conſidering will juſtly be ſuſpected of laughing at what they will not take any pains to comprehend.

BUT in the preſent caſe, as the ridiculers here cenſur'd are ſuppos'd to be of an higher order than mere triflers, it may be ſaid of them with great propriety, that their pride will be ſupported, their malignity gratify'd, and their levity indulg'd at a much leſs expence by Ridicule than Enquiry: It is eaſy to laugh where it is difficult to examine; and it is magiſterial to ſcoff, where it is vulgar to admire: And by this ſhort and compendious method, they

they appear what they would be to the unexperienc'd and unwary; but the veil being tranſpierc'd by more diſcerning eyes, they are ſeen at once to be ſuſpicious without proof, ſevere without juſtice, and ſcornful without reaſon; to be ſhewy, but not ſolid; trifling, but not graceful; and cunning, but not wiſe.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the ill conſequences of Ridicule which have a more extenſive influence on Society.*

THE bad conſequences of Ridicule mention'd in the laſt Chapter, may be call'd in ſome meaſure trivial in compariſon of thoſe which are inſiſted on in this; inaſmuch as they will be found of much greater extent, and capable ſometimes of ſhaking the very foundations of Society.

NOW the Firſt of theſe that I ſhall here mention is, the prejudice it does to Truth, and the Reaſon of things; making the one appear like Falſhood, and the other like Folly.

THERE is ſcarce any thing though ever ſo right and reaſonable in itſelf that can ſtand the *fire-ordeal* of banter; it brings the thing ſo low in the eſteem of mankind, that they either abſolutely refuſe to look

into it at all, or if they do, 'tis with ſo much prejudice and partiality, that they are ſcarce ever to be convinc'd.

THIS difficulty of conviction on the part of the ridiculer himſelf has been juſt now inſiſted on; but it's inconvenience would be ſlight, if it was not for the communication of it's poiſon, and the general contagion it brings on.

FROM this laſt circumſtance appears the reaſon why the Public itſelf, the beſt and moſt impartial judge of merit, has ſometimes acted with the caprice of an individual; and why ſome conſiderable characters, and eminent performances, have been in ſome ſort without a Patron or Friend in one age, and without an Enemy or Cenſurer in another; not that they were really leſs beautiful in themſelves, or wanted any thing to recommend them to the eſteem of mankind, (for human nature is the ſame in all ages and countries; and excepting a few ſlight circumſtances, is affected in the ſame manner:) But it was, becauſe they were vilify'd

lify'd and derided by ſome, and of conſequence loſt their eſteem with a great many others. But they have broke through theſe clouds of oppoſition and recover'd their genuin luſtre, when thoſe prejudices and prepoſſeſſions were laid aſleep, and bury'd with their authors.

Now here is ſuch a large field for this vice to expatiate and range in, that if drawn out on every occaſion, it may injure every thing human and divine: Truth may be perplex'd more than by falſe eloquence, and falſe logic; and demonſtration itſelf may be more invalidated than by the moſt cogent objections.

But the conſequence is ſtill worſe in regard to the intereſts of virtue: For it is not unreaſonable to aſſert, that if piety and morality themſelves, the things that are moſt natural to our condition, and the moſt neceſſary to ſupport the order and government of the world; I ſay, it is not unreaſonable to aſſert, that if theſe two uſeful and excellent principles were once to be

made the ſubjects of general ridicule, they would probably be look'd upon by the greateſt part of mankind to be trivial and unneceſſary things.

AND this we ſee in certain ages of the world has been in ſome degree brought to paſs; and as no age has been more remarkable than the preſent for this talent of ridicule, we actually find that ſome neceſſary parts of virtue are conſidered only as old-faſhion'd and formal things, whilſt the contrary vices in their utmoſt extent, are acknowledg'd, applauded, and purſued.

BUT Secondly: A worſe conſequence, and in ſome meaſure of the ſame nature with this, is the Contempt that is hereby brought on the Perſons and Authority of men.

THE far greateſt part of the world either for want of inclination, leiſure, or capacity, look no farther than the ſurface and exterior of things; never in the leaſt troubling themſelves with curious and laborious

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reſearches into their nature and eſſence: Hence it is that they for the moſt part judge of the doctrine as they judge of the author of it; and in their opinion, the man and his performance muſt ſtand or fall together.

WHATEVER therefore tends to make that man's character ridiculous, who is plac'd in public life, and has the care of the people committed to his charge, muſt of neceſſity tend alſo to bring upon a nation all thoſe calamities, which the inſtructions of ſuch a man, when deſpis'd, would bring: And if by the neglect of ſuch inſtructions mankind ſhould degenerate into Heatheniſm or barbarity, all this muſt be laid at the door of the banterer and buffoon. Neither can it be alledg'd with any tolerable propriety, that the ſacredneſs and authority of a man's character will guard againſt this contempt, ſince they will only more effectually expoſe him; it being the principal part of the ridicule to view the contraſt between repreſentation and fact;

to ſee wiſdom appear in the garb of folly, or the Magiſtrate act the part of the buffoon.

HENCE *Socrates*, whom the Oracle pronounc'd the wiſeſt of mortals, and who was conſtantly employ'd in the graveſt part of learning, that of moral Philoſophy, did thereby appear in the moſt ridiculous colours when repreſented on the ſtage, and perhaps on that very account gave birth to one of the moſt witty and facetious plays of the *Greek* comedian.

HENCE alſo that more fatal example of modern times; that general Deficiency of Piety, and almoſt univerſal Apoſtacy from the doctrines of Chriſt in this looſe and degenerate age.

IT cannot be either the multitude or weight of objections brought againſt it, that has thus abated men's zeal for the Goſpel diſpenſation; for theſe, though they muſt be own'd to be both numerous and powerful, have been rais'd and confuted above a thouſand years ago: Or if they were not con-

confuted then, and cannot at this time, yet the greateſt part of mankind either do not hear them at all, or don't underſtand them when propos'd: ſo that their prejudices againſt religion are got after a much more compendious, as well as leſs troubleſome manner.

THEY ſee thoſe very guides and conductors to happineſs, which in all ages and countries of the world have been treated with reverence and reſpect, now by a ſtrange reverſe of goodneſs treated with obloquy and ſcorn: and from the moment they ſee this, they begin to have a lower opinion both of their abilities and integrity; they cannot eaſily be brought to think that ſuch perſons can be qualify'd to teach *one part* of mankind their duty, when they are deſpis'd by the *other*; and as there muſt be ſome ground for this contempt, they are apt to ſuſpect that it muſt ariſe from a full and clear conviction, that the lives of the Prieſts are corrupt, and their doctrines not true.

So that by ſuch arts as theſe the ſacred and unerring rules of Chriſtianity may ſoon be reduced to thoſe of paganiſm; and the Prieſts of this holy inſtitution, and ſervants of the moſt high God, may appear as ridiculous as thoſe of *Baal* or *Aſhtaroth*, of *Jupiter* or *Minerva*.

HENCE, paradoxical as it is, men are laugh'd out of their reaſon and happineſs together: A little impertinent wit can make them forget that there was a Saviour of the world; and a jeer againſt his Prieſts make them deny his Divinity.

WHERE thoughtfulneſs and ſobriety have fail'd, levity and buffoonery have ſucceeded: — The force of argument has given place to drollery, and the arts of rhetoric to grimace: And what ought to be ſome mortification to the tribe of Infidels, their greateſt Genii and profoundeſt ſcholars, have in the laudable enterprize of ſubverting religion, been much exceeded by the diſſolute, and the idle; by the ſcorner without parts, and the banterer without modeſty;

modeſty; by beaux without ſenſe, rakes without conſcience; and wits without learning.

AND for the truth of all this, beſide the reaſonableneſs of the thing, I appeal to moſt certain inſtances of fact, from whence 'tis plain, that though Chriſtianity was never ſo well preach'd and explain'd, yet it never was ſo little regarded, and ſo much deſpis'd as in the preſent age; and we may preſume to declare, that if ever this religion receives any fatal wound, it muſt be through the ſides of it's profeſſors.

BUT here I would not be underſtood to mean that Chriſtianity can receive any real damage by this proceeding: It has the ſame real beauty though ſet in a falſe light; the ſame intrinſic perfections, though pains are taken to obſcure them: He that hath ears to hear, may if he pleaſes be convinc'd of the great truths of the Goſpel, in ſpite of the noiſe of impertinent folly; and he that hath eyes to ſee, may if he will carefully attend, diſcern their beauty, in

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ſpite of the miſts of raillery caſt before him.

AND in this ſenſe, and this only, can be admitted that ſingular and much diſputed obſervation of a celebrated Writer, That ſacred and important truths are plac'd above contempt, and can never be injured by ridicule.*

BUT it is time to proceed to the laſt, and worſt ill conſequence of this fault, which is an utter Incompatibility with Zeal to the State, which is the principal point purſued in theſe diſcourſes.

NOW the plain reaſon of this incompatibility is, their deriving their origin from different ſources; their being habituated to different views; and their being made up of jarring and inconſiſtent principles.

THUS zeal for the moſt part muſt take it's riſe from warm and active diſpoſitions; ridicule from indolent and cool ones: Zeal as it grows up muſt generally be ſupported by partial and imperfect views; ri-

* *Shaftſbury.*

dicule

dicule by thoſe which are extenſive and full: And both muſt be maintain'd in their maturity and perfection, by the continuance of thoſe cauſes by which they ſprang up and grew.

THIS is the caſe with zeal in general; but now zeal for the State requires farther ſtrong affections, ſocial diſpoſitions, fearleſſneſs of danger, high opinions of the excellency of the Government, a deep ſenſe of uncommon happineſs under it, and a ſtrong preſumption that it is no where elſe to be found: But none of theſe qualities are neceſſary, moſt of them contrary to the nature of ridicule.

AGREEABLY to this we find, that the zeal of this ſort is generally intent on the ſtrength and perfection of the State; ridicule on it's weakneſs and decay: — Zeal is wont to heighten it's ſucceſs; ridicule to diminiſh it: Zeal weeps over it's calamities with unfeigned grief; ridicule looks on with indifference or ſcorn: Zeal courts both difficulties and dangers on the firſt appear-

appearance of diſtreſs; ridicule avoids both, even when there are moſt evident ſymptoms of it's final diſſolution: — Zeal compares it with but few other States, and therefore keeps up it's attachment and regard; ridicule compares it with all, and from thence preſerves it's coldneſs and neglect: — In a word, zeal like a warm and affectionate lover hangs over it's beauty; ridicule like a captious and contemptuous critic inſults over it's deformity.

BUT this is not all; we before took notice of that fatal propenſity in the lovers of ridicule, to ſuch a dangerous lightneſs of heart and conduct, that whenever the admiſſion of ſerious truths, and eſpecially that of the Goſpel was required, it made their conviction in a manner become impoſſible.

AND this the great Author of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian revelations, who certainly knew the Genius of his own diſpenſations beſt, and was intimately acquainted with the frame of his creatures, has ſo frequently and forcibly inculcated, that throughout

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the Scriptures no diſpoſition of heart is reckon'd more unfavourable to religion than this; nay, it's contrariety to it is ſo manifeſt, and it's incompatibility ſo certain, that the ſeat of the Infidel and the ſeat of the Scorner are made in effect the ſame thing.

Now zeal for the State requires much the ſame circumſtances to make it flouriſh, as zeal for religion: And both are for the moſt part ſo intimately join'd, that very few nations have been remarkable for the one, who have not in ſome degree at leaſt been eminent for the other: They both alike therefore have unfavourable claims upon the Sons of banter; and will both alike be rejected in their diſdainful School.

But farther yet; that portion of malignity, that exuberance of pride, and thoſe endleſs ſuſpicions which were before remark'd to be inherent in this quality, will be apt to make the favourers of it fierce in their inſults, and inacceſſible to pity: Slow in their reſolves, and feeble in their endeavours

deavours to protect a State, whoſe conſtitution is diſregarded, and whoſe individuals are deſpiſed; in which they can ſee nothing that can claim a wiſe man's attention beyond their particular ſafety, and the ſecurity of that ſmall and inconſiderable portion of time in which they were to continue in being.

As the preſent train of argument may from it's uncommonneſs and ſingularity be thought to ſtand in need of ſome proper illuſtration, it may receive it from the inſpection into the conduct of thoſe two Philoſophers, who, we are inform'd in hiſtory, were of ſuch oppoſite complexions, that the life of the one was inceſſantly employ'd in the moſt outrageous laughter; that of the other in unfeigned tears over the follies of mankind.

Now in the one of theſe pity borders upon love, and love borders upon zeal; in the other, laughter is perpetuated by pride, and pride for the moſt part admits only of ſelfiſh conſiderations. — The one ſhews

ſome eſteem of his fellow-creatures by grieving at their defects, and might eaſily be induc'd to lay himſelf out in unweary'd endeavours to remedy, or prevent them: But the other is made up of ſuch intractable materials, as cannot well bend to the relief of the diſtreſs'd, or give attention to things unworthy of his notice, and beneath his concern: – In a word, the weeping Philoſopher was a Being friendly and modeſt, that by pathetic remonſtrances might be made uſeful to the Community, and zealous for the State; while the laughing one was a Wretch that was diſdainful of reproof, whom no miſery could ſoften, and no affection could warm.

I will add Two obſervations in confirmation of this reaſoning from the beſt ſupports of truth, experience, and fact: My Firſt obſervation is, that the reſpective Patrons of zeal and ridicule, ſo participate of the antipathy natural to theſe qualities, that they are ſcarce ever fair, equitable, or moderate in their opinions of each other:

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To the one, the zealous are generally eſteem'd Bigots; to the other, the Banterer is as generally a Buffoon: And as the zealous look upon this latter claſs, as objects of their juſteſt and moſt extreme averſion; ſo the ſhafts of ridicule are againſt no one ſhot with ſuch peculiar venom, as againſt the warm and enthuſiaſtic breaſt.

My other obſervation is, and I wiſh it were not too true, that amongſt all people remarkably conſpicuous for the love of their Country, the paſſion for ridicule has been weak; and with all thoſe where this laſt paſſion has been riſing to immoderate heights, the former one in proportion has gradually languiſh'd and dy'd away.

The moſt illuſtrious inſtances on the records of ſtory for the tranſcendant love of their reſpective Governments, were the *Spartans* and the *Romans*; and while this retain'd it's place in their breaſts, and flamed out with full and undiminiſh'd force, it devour'd like ſtubble all the trivial arts of laughter and ridicule.

Hence

HENCE during the infancy and youth of their States before corruption and wantonneſs broke in, all was maſculine, lofty, and bold; all was ſerious, rational, and ſevere; there was little room for ſcorn, but that of the coward; little room for inſult, but that over the ſlave: Burleſque on religion was a thing unheard of; and ſcoffs at the Government a thing unknown.

HENCE thoſe noble and enthuſiaſtic flights; that inextinguiſhable ardor and thirſt of liberty; that unbroken conſtancy under excruciating pain; thoſe prodigies of valor, thoſe voluntary deaths, and thoſe martyrdoms to the State, which in latter ages have, agreeably to their caſt, been ſtyl'd romantic and extravagant; but were look'd upon in their own with the moſt profound eſteem, were ſet off in colours which will never fade, and recorded in writings which will never dye.

IT grieves me to be forc'd in proſecution of my argument, in any degree to contraſt theſe illuſtrious examples with the laugh-

ing Patriots of modern times: It grieves me more to reflect, that in this land of liberty, Ridicule has rais'd it's fantaſtic fabric on the noble ruins of affection to the State; but as I have already ſaid enough to illuſtrate this matter, and more eſpecially as we have ſeen of late ſome efforts to excite a better ſpirit, I will here ſhut up the train of reaſoning on this important point.

AND now is not the inference from theſe long diſcourſes both neceſſary and plain? Is it not time to awake from our dream of levity, during the continuance of which we cannot well be either good Chriſtians or men, nor rightly qualify ourſelves for the important affairs either of this world, or a better?

THERE are ſome cauſes indeed of this general depravity, eſpecially thoſe ariſing from the diffuſion of knowledge, and the reformation of religion, the happy reſtoration, the revolution, acceſſion, &c. from which a fairer produce might have reaſon-

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ably been expected; but ſo imprudently have we manag'd it, that what ſhould have been our happineſs is actually become our bane; and in this reſpect our Conduct has been altogether as unnatural, as if we were to pave the Seas for our Enemies to enter, or let in the Waters that ſurround our Iſle.

BUT it becomes us now, after this clear information of the dangerouſneſs of our State, to apply theſe bleſſings, with many other that our ſituation affords, to their proper uſe, which we ſhall probably be in a fit diſpoſition to do, if from this moment we reſolve to be ſerious.

IN a word, Serioufneſs in our condition is that proſperous Soil, in which the ſeeds of all virtue, both public and private, will receive their proper increaſe; whereas Laughter is that light and ſtony ground, where but few of them will at firſt take root, or if they do, will but ſpring up and die.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Other means of acquiring Zeal.*

THO' in the laſt Diſcourſes we had arriv'd no farther in our general deſign, than to that ſhort and ſimple admonition to be ſerious; yet it is in ſome degree ſurpriſing to conſider how large a portion of our national vices it will ſuppreſs: We have already ſeen it's influence over one of theſe; and the other three have often, and I think not unfairly, been pronounc'd to be Love of Pleaſure, great Corruption, and extenſive Infidelity.

NOW as to the love of pleaſure, it is ſometimes ſo cloſely connected with the love of ſome ſpecies of ridicule; generally ſuch a concomitant of it, and always ſo oppoſite to a ſerious diſpoſition, that whenever we ſhall arrive at this turn of mind, we ſhall in effect have cut off two of the capital vices at one common blow.

AND then as to corruption, it is ſo often admitted to adminiſter to the love of pleaſure, and infidelity is ſo often owing to want of conſideration, that of the four ſources from which the waters of bitterneſs have overflow'd the land, part of them will be totally dry'd up, and part of them be conſiderably diminiſh'd by this happy diſpoſition.

IT may perhaps be expected that I ſhould next proceed to the conſideration of the love of pleaſure, as I did before in regard to ridicule, and ſhew that it has equally infected the general maſs of the *Engliſh* people: It has probably indeed infected them more, as it will be often found to prevail among the lower Claſſes, where the other cannot ſo eaſily reach: But as this point is more level to common and ordinary underſtandings, as it has frequently been inſiſted on by other Writers; but more eſpecially, as it is a thing almoſt generally confeſs'd, I will leave it, and go on to the other means of reviving zeal

among the People. — The Firſt of which that I ſhall here mention is, to watch attentively the Motions of our Hearts, and take the proper Advantage of every favourable Suggeſtion.

THAT which happens to a profligate Sinner during a courſe of vice, will ſometimes happen to a profligate People during a courſe of corruption: They will both have ſome ſhort and tranſient intervals, in which they will look back with abhorrence on their former conduct, and wiſh that it could be alter'd.

WHENEVER therefore the ſprings of public Spirit are touch'd in us by this wiſh, let us not by deſpair ſuppreſs it's dictates, or by different ſentiments impede it's operations. On the contrary, let us encourage it by every means, and throw every thing in it's way that may haſten it's growth, and bring it on to perfection.

AND for our farther aſſurance, let us hope, what our religion ſo frequently inculcates, that this ſuggeſtion may be rais'd

in us by the eternal Spirit, and that if we rudely reject it, we may never be call'd upon a ſecond time: And let us not deſpiſe it's ſeeming inſignificancy, when we know, that under his influence the very ſmalleſt beginnings of virtue and grace are capable of ariſing to ſuch exalted heights, as at the firſt view ſeem'd to be altogether inconceivable; like that Cloud in the Scripture, which at firſt appear'd but as the hand of a man, but was ſoon to cover the whole face of heaven.

WITH theſe hopes therefore, and with this diſpoſition to improve every proper conſideration that may be offer'd to us in this reſpite from Corruption, let us, as another means to excite our zeal, come near and behold the well-built fabric of our Conſtitution: Let us carefully ſurvey it in all it's parts; on the one ſide examine the beauty of Holineſs; on the other, the beauty of Freedom; and then help falling in love with it, if we can: — For certainly what *Plato* could ſay of wiſdom, that if it

could be beheld in it's genuin luſtre, it would neceſſarily excite the affections of the Spectator, may as properly be ſaid of the moſt excellent Government, and the moſt excellent Religion that ever appear'd in the world.

It ſhould not however be omitted here, that there is one plauſible objection againſt the propriety of this means, and which ought to be obviated before we go on: It has been intimated before of Zeal, and in general is moſt indiſputably true, that it is neither ſo clear-ſighted, nor ſo comprehenſive as wiſdom, and owes for the moſt part it's warmth and vigor to this general defect.

Now as every cloſe and accurate inſpection of the moſt perfect object brings ſeveral blemiſhes and imperfections to light which were unknown before, it ſhould ſeem on this account that the beſt and trueſt means of promoting or preſerving zeal, would be to keep it at a diſtance from every thing excellent, and never to bring it near.

THE objection in general is moſt indubitably juſt: But as we are conſidering only the comparative excellency of all political conſtitutions, in which claſs our own is the firſt; there is not the leaſt danger that zeal ſhould reject, what wiſdom itſelf cannot juſtly reprehend.

HOW juſt therefore is the invitation to *Engliſhmen* to inſpect a conſtitution, which requires not artifice, but reaſon to be approv'd; and which wants not dusk and twilight to ſupport it, but open day; which is one of thoſe ſingular and extraordinary beauties, which the cloſer we examine, the more we muſt admire; and which the nearer we approach, the more we muſt love?

WHEN once therefore we are in love with it, we know that zeal is not far off; eſpecially if we conſider farther, that this is not a profuſion of beauty ſeparated from uſe; and that we are not like ſimple ſpectators to be ſtruck with charms that are to periſh in the beholding; but that the very charms

charms of it ariſe from the fitneſs of every part to obtain it's ends, and give to every member that portion of eaſe, independance, and liberty which is proper for the ſtation whereunto he belongs.

EXACTLY ſimilar is the caſe with our faith: When the inhabitants of any country are ſurrounded by neighbours whoſe ſeveral religions are equally falſe with their own; Or when one or more of theſe religions have greater degrees of probability, *there* it is neceſſary that zeal ſhould have but imperfect views, and be in a manner hoodwink'd to keep alive it's warmth for the eſtabliſh'd doctrines: But when Chriſtianity is to be compar'd with other religious ſyſtems; or when our Church is to be compared with thoſe of corrupted Chriſtianity, with thoſe of Popery on the one hand, or fanaticiſm on the other; this is one of thoſe rare and extraordinary caſes, where zeal muſt of neceſſity receive new vigour from examination, and freſh wings from enquiry.

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NEITHER let it be ſaid here, that men of all denominations in the ſchool of Chriſt, have generally been zealous in proportion as they have been ignorant, and argued with greater fierceneſs for modes than eſſentials, for chimæras than for truth: It is here that zeal appears in it's proper colours unaided by reaſon, and uninfluenc'd by cool and mature deliberation: But this is the very reverſe of the quality we are recommending; ſince in the one caſe it is folly, in the other wiſdom; in the one caſe it is a furious and diabolical paſſion, in the other a pure and heavenly flame.

IN ſhort, we are not ſo much conſidering what men have been, as what they ought; we are not contending for blindneſs, but light; not for the barbarous and bloody contentions of inquiſitors, and bigots, but for the noble efforts, and benevolent ſallies of rational and Chriſtian zeal.

THIRDLY:

THIRDLY: Another means of reviving and cheriſhing this principle is, to have ſtrong and vigorous Impreſſions of national Glory.

NOTHING is more common to obſerve, than that many admitted into illuſtrious companies, for which they were at firſt by no means qualify'd, have yet afterwards become their greateſt Ornaments, chiefly by reflecting on the credit of their ſituation: — The feeble and the coward have frequently by this means finiſh'd their courſe with honour in the field of battle; and the diſſipated and the idle have fill'd up their ſtations in the moſt learned ſocieties with dignity and applauſe: — And this likewiſe is the caſe with nations themſelves: When once the particulars which compoſe a State are fond of it's glory, they will be zealous for it's ſucceſs.

IT gives me pleaſure to obſerve that a conſiderable portion of this ſpirit yet prevails among the lower orders of our countrymen; and would to God it prevail'd equally

equally in the higher! but inſtead of this, we have ſeen in ſome late and memorable diſaſters, that they have in ſome ſort taken pains to ſuppreſs it's ardor, and meanly plac'd a ſmall ſuperiority in fleets and armies above the credit, the honour, and dignity of the *Engliſh* name. And yet by encouraging, or indeed only by falling in with theſe impreſſions of their inferiors, they had undoubtedly broke through every oppoſition; and inſtead of hazarding either character or life, had been glorioufly brought back in the arms of victory to their native land.

FREQUENT and full are the inſtances to this point in the ſongs and hiſtories of the antient world; but it may be more proper to obſerve here, that the higher orders of the people in a neighbouring country are not at all behind them: Who under the guidance and incitement of this principle only, with every other advantage againſt them, have given as great and illuſtrious

ſtrious proofs of fortitude and valour as any nation on record.

NAY ſo powerful has been it's influence, that it has not only rous'd them from the lap of pleaſure, and made them break with precipitancy and ardor through all it's allurements at the trumpet's ſound; but it has irreſiſtibly ſpread itſelf to ſuch lower ranks as were cowards by nature, and only grew valiant from the reputation of that order into which they were inliſted.

AND all this at a time, when neither the dignity of their government was great, nor their property ſecure; when there was no liberty either in Religion or the State, that was worth contending for; and no eminent and conſpicuous inſtances of national valour to provoke their imitation: In a word, when they were by many degrees inferior to us in every aid and every incentive, that ſhould give ſtrength and ardor to this generous principle.

NOR let it be wantonly aſk'd here by the lovers of gain, what charms there can be in the letters which compoſe the words *Britain* or *national Glory*, that ſhould make us expoſe ourſelves to dangers without any proſpect of reward; ſince the ſafety of the community can never be a mean and inconſiderable reward for our ſtrongeſt endeavours: But excluſive of this it may fairly be pronounc'd, that the charms of the word Glory, are at leaſt as efficacious as the charms of the word Gain; ſince the ends of both, when the few wants of nature are ſatisfy'd, is Diſtinction; and which diſtinction is the moſt valuable, the world is ſufficiently agreed: The one being nothing elſe but glitter and oſtentation; the other being a diſplay of uſeful qualities and benevolent affections.

As little let it be objected, that there is great difficulty in keeping warm thoſe ſentiments of national fame, ſince there is at leaſt equal difficulty in ſuffering them to grow cool; all nations are ſo tinctur'd with them

them from their earlieſt years, that great emergencies will frequently call them again to life, when by mean reflexions, and ungenerous practices they are almoſt extinguiſh'd; ſo that little more is required of us in the preſent caſe, than readily to fall-in with theſe honeſt prejudices of the heart, without doing violence to it's dictates and thwarting it's operations.

FOURTHLY: Another means of reviving and cheriſhing this principle is, to conſider that we are yet Freemen; and that there is a dignity of ſentiment and warmth of heart, a grandeur of mind and ſuperiority of courage peculiar to men of that exalted character: That all this is ſtill heighten'd to us, who are almoſt the only Freemen in the world; at leaſt, that the fate of moſt other nations that are free is in a great meaſure bound up in our's; ſo that we are not only contending for the moſt valuable poſſeſſion ourſelves, but animating by our example the reſt of Mankind.

AND

AND ſurely if things excellent deſerve our zeal, as they moſt certainly do, we muſt be zealous here; ſince preſerving happineſs to ourſelves, and at the ſame time communicating it to the reſt of our fellow-creatures, is the utmoſt pitch of eminence and perfection to which mortal wiſdom, and mortal virtue can aſpire.

NEITHER is this motive only applicable to the generous heart; nor is it only pure and diſintereſted benevolence that it is meant to recommend: It's uſe will be found to be not altogether contemptible, if we rightly conſider, that every Freeman gain'd from the confines of ſlavery, is in ſome meaſure gain'd to the State, and that whole nations, if they can be thus happily deliver'd, will naturally become our friends.

LET us obſerve farther, what is not unparallel'd in the records of hiſtory, nor altogether hopeleſs from the circumſtances of the people, that our enemies themſelves during the progreſs of liberty may feel it's

influence, and make ſome bold and ſucceſsful efforts for it's reſtoration at home; in which caſe it may fairly and ſafely be predicted, that their wars and conteſts will become leſs frequent, and their ſtruggles for, at leaſt, if not their thirſt of dominion, be conſiderably abated.

AT the worſt let us reflect, that we are acting upon a principle, which even the moſt abject heart will be ſure to extol; and that we ought to hope for every thing feaſible from ſuch an excellent principle.

FIFTHLY: Another way of reviving and cheriſhing this principle is, to conſider the great and manifold dangers that ſurround us.

MOST nations in the infancy of their government are obſerv'd to be very zealous for it's ſupport, and to make moſt impetuous efforts for it's preſervation: and the reaſon of this ſeems to be, that it is then more ſubject to diſtreſs, and more eaſy to be overturn'd.

THIS was the caſe at the beginning of the Reformation under the reign of that illuſtrious Princeſs already mention'd; when the chief powers of the world were ſeverally engag'd to diſpute her title, diſturb her government, and extirpate her Religion: This begat in all an earneſt deſire to ſee the conſtitution ſettled; and this deſire overcame all difficulties.

THE dangers that ſurround us are greater, as many enemies of ſeveral nations are eaſier to reſiſt, than thoſe of one moſt formidably great, and under the influence of a Tyrant moſt greedy to devour.

VERY celebrated in the *Roman* ſtory is that ſingular advice of the elder *Cato*, not totally to ſuppreſs a once powerful rival, leſt luxury and neglect ſhould break in upon them, when none were able to reſiſt their arms.

BUT the wiſdom of his prediction was juſtify'd by the event; and however proſperous or fortunate it might appear to vulgar eyes, yet the *Romans* dated the de-

cline of their virtue and public Spirit, from that critical moment in which their rival was deſtroy'd.

AND this will be exactly the caſe with every nation in the ſame circumſtances; it will ſlumber on in fatal ſecurity when no enemy is near; and it will ſink in valour, in moderation and zeal, as it riſes to general and uncontroul'd dominion.

THIS indeed is never like to be our caſe, both from the form of our government and nature of our ſituation; but more eſpecially from that clear and inconteſted ſuperiority of our inveterate enemy, and his never ceaſing attempts to interrupt our Commerce, to diminiſh our power, or even ſubdue our State.

As therefore the danger is great, and like to be perpetual, it is to be hoped, that our zeal will likewiſe accompany it to the end of time: It *will* do ſo, if this danger be rightly conſider'd, and we be duly influenc'd by either human prudence or human affections: For as long as we are men, we

muſt

muſt be deſirous of civil bleſſings; and it cannot be ſaid, that theſe civil bleſſings were ever more firmly eſtabliſh'd, or more worth contending for in any other period of our government than the preſent.

I will not except even the glorious one juſt mention'd, in which, though the honour and intereſt of *England* were moſt invariably purſued, yet they were left more expos'd to the influence of prerogative, and the caprice of will.

How much the train of reaſoning on this head is confirm'd by ſome late and memorable tranſactions amongſt ourſelves, I am both griev'd and glad to relate: Griev'd to look back upon the melancholy reduction of that important fortreſs, which will ſtain the annals of the *Engliſh* nation with perpetual infamy; — but glad to reflect, that in the conſequences of things that loſs has prov'd our gain; that by placing our danger full before us, it ſuddenly made us a more zealous people, and rais'd us at once from diffidence, from

cowardice, from dejection and diſtreſs, to hope, to fortitude, to reſolution and victory.

MAY the ſame zeal which deriv'd it's birth from calamity, grow up to maturity through enterprizing deeds and ſucceſsful conflicts! and may it ſubſiſt, if poſſible, in it's vigor and perfection, as the danger becomes more diſtant, and the tempeſt blows over!

SIXTHLY: Another way of reviving and cheriſhing this principle is, to conſider the beneficial Tendency of our Religion above all others in the world.

GOVERNMENT goes a great way towards ſecuring our natural rights: Religion goes farther: Chriſtianity goes farther ſtill; and that ſpecies of it which we profeſs goes fartheſt of all.

GOVERNMENT we ſay makes our lives ſafe; but it is only againſt offences puniſhable by the laws: Religion reaches the heart. And though the religion of nature is weak, and that of popery is corrupt, yet that

that of the Reformation is neither: — It wants not, like the former, the great incitement to virtue under the faint and doubtful glimmerings of a future ſtate; nor does it lead, like the latter, to the corruption of the heart, and the diſturbance of ſociety; to the moſt unnatural dominion over the conſciences of men, as well as to the moſt prodigious and complicated iniquity that was ever eſtabliſh'd in the world.

If therefore it was formerly thought proper by the great defenders of liberty, to rouſe up zeal by animating their fellow-ſoldiers *pro aris & focis*, what is it now? If in *Pagan* countries the ſafety of their wives, their children, or their properties, was a ſufficient incitement to it, what is it *here?* and if *Popery* has any inducement to this excellent principle, what has the Reformation?

The Heathens in their beſt and moſt flouriſhing ſtate were under the influence of ſuch a contemptible religion, and *that* ſupported by ſuch weak and inconſiderable

gods, that it could not, one would think, have the due weight on their minds; and of conſequence, when they had got over the aſſaults from abroad, they muſt on that account be ſtill more expos'd than we are at home; and muſt be in greater apprehenſion that the domeſtic aſſaſſin might finiſh, what the foreign invader had began. — The Papiſts ſhould naturally have the ſame fearful apprehenſions, on account of their vices being bought off with money; and a ſyſtem that can allow on ſo many infamous occaſions ſuch great remiſſion and indulgence to individuals, muſt too often be rather an encouragement than reſtraint to offenders.

BUT we, God be thank'd, are freed from theſe terrors, as being guided by a Religion which we know to be reveal'd from God, and uncorrupted by men; and which beſides we know to be ſo happily incorporated with the civil conſtitution, that the one only confirms, what the other propoſes; the one only adds all poſſible ſtrength, and

all

all poſſible ſecurities to that beautiful plan of happineſs which the other had laid down.

WHAT is here ſaid, regards only ſome of the great out-lines of the Proteſtant Religion, and the weak degree of faith with which it is admitted in theſe kingdoms: Nay, it would tend to excite political zeal in many, though they had not the leaſt belief in it themſelves, becauſe the admiſſion of it by others is of ſo much conſequence to the general ſecurity. But now if we were to give farther a detail of it's principal and important doctrines, ſuch as neglect of riches, reliance on Providence, fortitude in diſtreſs, contempt of death, and thirſt after Eternity; it would be amazing to ſee what ardor they would incite in us, and with what ſtrength they would ſupport us in our conflicts, with violent and blood-thirſty enemies.

AND here is a proper place to recommend as a freſh motive, a full and earneſt belief of the Chriſtian diſpenſation; that

ſo

ſo with the union of theſe irreſiſtible qualities religious and political zeal, we might triumph at once over all oppoſition, and be ſuperior to the fierceſt and moſt vehement attacks that impotent creatures can make: But as I have not yet done with the ſubject of civil zeal, this point muſt be treated of ſeparately, and at the concluſion.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the power of Example.*

THO' we have already paſs'd thro' ſo many gradual advances to the acquiſition of public Spirit, that it ſhould ſeem in a manner to be well-nigh complete, yet it never can be ſo without the attainment of another qualification, more neceſſary perhaps than any one of the reſt, and at the ſame time more difficult to be acquired than all of them put together. — This is a full Superiority over the inordinate love of gain; and that, equally when it is ſought after to raiſe us to unneceſſary heights, or for oſtentation and pride; equally to abuſe it in thoſe dangerous extremes of laying it up in ſordid heaps, or waſting it in prodigal and licentious living.

AND here it will ſcarce be expected, that I ſhould take any pains to ſhew, that this quality is in an eſpecial manner requiſite

to

to our Countrymen; or that the want of it has occaſion'd moſt of the public and private miſcarriages both abroad and at home: Let it ſuffice to obſerve, that this has been on all ſides confeſs'd, and that for a long ſeries of years the cry againſt Corruption has been ſo loud, and ſo ſtrong, that it has reach'd every Corner of the habitable world, where there is any mention of the *Engliſh* name.

Now tho' it is a matter extremely difficult to find means to reſiſt and ſubdue the power of ſo prevailing a vice, yet it is certain, that ſomething has been done towards it in the ſeveral motives mention'd before; eſpecially in thoſe two, the reflexion that we are Freemen, and ought to have ſtrong and vigorous impreſſions of national Honour.

For it will be found, by the manner in which we have deſcanted on theſe Two points, that they will naturally make us averſe to the luſt of gain, which is always ſordid, contemptible, and mean; always reducing

reducing the flights of Heroiſm, and utterly inconſiſtent with that benevolent expanſion of thought, and that noble elevation of Soul which prompts us to Beneficence, and carries us on to Glory.

YET as this ſubtle vice will ſometimes find means to inſinuate itſelf even *here*; as the various topics relating to it taken from the inefficacy of Wealth, the ſervility of Dependance, the proſtitution of our Honour, it's baneful influence on the State, and incompatability with our Religion, have been long before exhauſted: In ſhort, as almoſt all Sorts of arms have in this field been hitherto drawn out in vain, we are glad that there is one yet remaining of greater force than them all together, and that is the power of Example.

IT was this power that chiefly reduc'd us from a frugal and public-ſpirited people to the preſent State of Selfiſhneſs and Corruption; and it is this Power that muſt again reſtore us to our priſtine Luſtre.

BUT the few examples that are at preſent exhibited, may perhaps induce us rather to deſpair than hope: Let us firſt therefore, before we proceed to experience, look into the nature and efficacy of Example.

THAT the race of men are imitative Beings; that they generally follow the beaten track; that if they ſometimes deviate from it, they quickly return; that they find a greater Support from Numbers than their own Abilities; that when they are not able to reach excellencies, they will copy even defects, with other obſervations of the like nature, are truths too obvious to be inſiſted on. — But that thoſe who are vitious ſhould labour to be virtuous; that thoſe who are miſerable, ſhould become cheerful in affliction; — and that thoſe who are in an eaſy State, ſhould pant after a difficult one; and all from the prevalency and influence of Example, as they are inſtances more rare, ſo they do not admit of ſo eaſy a Solution: Yet unleſs they can

fully be accounted for upon this Principle, they will perhaps be imputed to ſome latent cauſes, in which caſe our train of reaſoning on the preſent point may ſeem to be defective.

LET it be obſerv'd therefore, that the truth of the whole matter ſeems to be this, that as happineſs in ſome form or other is the general end and deſign of intellectual Beings, whenever it happens that Men forſake the bed of eaſe, without the view of any temporary advantage, by ſetting before them great examples, they place a higher ſatisfaction in the conſciouſneſs of their own Powers, by being able to arrive at ſuch eminence and perfection, than in the eaſier enjoyments, and more acceſſible conveniences of their own ſituation.

AND then as to the comfort we receive from example under affliction, the fear of Shame often effects in this caſe, what the love of eminence did in the other: And we are not willing to ſink beneath the dignity

dignity of our nature, by being unable to endure what others had done before.

THIS is the caſe at the worſt. But now on the other hand, the Voluptuary who becomes a Hero, has often before him the luſtre of arms, the hope of conqueſt, the applauſe of men, the accumulation of wealth, and ſometimes even the return to his former eaſe with augmented fortunes, dignity, and ſplendor.

AND on the other hand, the ſoft Complainer in affliction, who ſuddenly becomes reſolute, has perhaps relatives to eaſe, a character to ſupport, or a reputation to gain; or, perhaps, he has before him not examples of the dead, but of ſuch living Sufferers, as he either loves, or admires; whoſe affections he would procure, or whoſe eſteem he would deſerve; whoſe endearing qualities make him emulous of his diſtreſs; or whoſe unmerited fate makes him aſhamed to complain of ſimilar calamities.

IT was upon ſome ſuch plan as this, eſpecially the former part of it, that the moral philoſophy of the Ancients, in few reſpects inferior to that of the Moderns, exhorts us to comfort ourſelves in extreme diſtreſs, by the reflexion on thoſe illuſtrious examples who had paſs'd before with Conſtancy and Reſolution thro' the ſame circumſtances of affliction.

THIS was one of the moſt common, as well as moſt conſiderable arguments, that a diſtinguiſh'd Sect of their Philoſophers had urged againſt the fear of Death.

*Ipſe Epicurus obit* ———

was in their Creed an Article of ſuch infinite importance, that it was at once to make the Elevated and the Bold confront without heſitation this King of terrors, and ſhame the grovelling and puſillanimous heart into a mild acquieſcence in this general law.

MUCH indeed has been ſaid in modern times, ſince life and immortality has been

ſo plainly brought to light, to ridicule this boaſted and uſeful tenet of the Pagan philoſophy; and it has frequently been aſk'd, with unmeaning inſult, why we ſhould reſt ſatisfy'd with the loſs of all that is valuable; only becauſe others of more exalted Characters had loſt it before: We have already given ſome account of this matter; but if we had not, ſurely this queſtion is to the laſt degree impertinent, when we are not ſo much conſidering what *ought* to bring us comfort, as what actually *does*; and that this laſt is the certain and indubitable privilege of the preſent argument, the Condition of Humanity ſufficiently declares.

THERE is ſomething peculiarly ſoothing to Melancholy and Diſtreſs in the tragical Stories of ſuch calamitous Events as are applicable to their Condition: And there is ſomething as peculiarly animating to dejection and deſpair in the recital of ſuch bold and ſucceſsful Struggles as have carried men thro' difficulties every way ſuperior

rior to thoſe under which they are ſinking.

AND if theſe feelings be caus'd in us, as they really are, by well-wrought tales and fictitious repreſentations, how much more affected muſt we neceſſarily be by ſuch real examples as ſuit exactly with our circumſtances, and are plac'd directly before us?

LET us add farther, for we may do it with great juſtice, that there are various caſes where even terror may be pleaſing, and even affliction joyous; when upon this principle we are either prompted by numbers, or ſupported by authority, when we are incited by emulation, or led on by glory.

THUS the horrors of Death were not only altogether courted by the great Champion of *Iſrael* in that tremendous wiſh, *Let me die with the Philiſtines*; but even the ſofter paſſions of pity and love have produc'd the like reſolute and joyful Martyrs on leſs noble occaſions.

BUT among all thoſe ranks and conditions of men, where the principle we are conſidering ſhould exert chiefly it's influence, it is no where ſo eminently forcible, as in thoſe embattled Myriads, who forget their miſeries, and are even fired into tranſports from the example of a painful and magnanimous Commander.

NOW the plain conſequence of this reaſoning is, that if the influence of example can make us cheerful on the couch of miſery, and tired on the lap of pleaſure; if it can make us court difficulty, and thirſt after danger; nay, if it make terror pleaſing, and even death deſirable; no wonder that it ſhould be able to accompliſh the leſs arduous work of rendering us frugal and moderate; contented with the profits that our ſituation affords, and feaſting on a little upon better terms, and with a better conſcience, than any that can be had from the wages of corruption, and the plunder of the ſtate.

BUT ſtill it will be inſiſted on, that the examples among ourſelves, though eminent, are too few; I muſt therefore inforce his reaſoning with ſome inſtances to the point.

NOW to raiſe a people at once from luxury and ſloth; to make them figure in the field, where before they were contemptible; to make them ſignificant among fierce and contending neighbours; nay, to make them for a time the firſt, where before they were the laſt; and all this too from a ſingle example, is a work that the preſent objectors would think hopeleſs and impracticable: — Yet this was done by the * *Theban.*

FOR one man to change ſuddenly the modes and cuſtoms of a wide and extenſive nation; to alter their opinions, and correct their manners; to pour in light on the realms of darkneſs, and to make them emerge from brutality and barbariſm into humanity and politeneſs, ſhould to theſe

* *Epaminondas.*

objectors ſeem another *Herculean* labour: — Yet this was done by the *Ruſſian*.

FOR the head of a ſmall and inconſiderable people to confront a ſtrong and formidable conjunction of the greateſt nations; to draw out a long and deſtructive war againſt them, with comparatively ſpeaking, neither territory nor reſource; to change as it were the nature of the military art; to throw it's ranks into diſorder, and it's rules into confuſion; in a word, to make paucity victorious, where by the regulations of that ſcience numbers only ſhould prevail; and all this by that acquieſcence in hardſhip, and that contempt of death, with which his example inſpires his faithful followers, is a third work as great as either of the other two: — Yet this is done by the *Pruſſian*.

THE occaſion is favourable from the mention of our illuſtrious ally abroad, to look towards his ſupporters at home, and to hope that in their turns they will be able to effect as great a deliverance, and to

quell

quell a more deſtructive, or at leaſt a more dangerous monſter, than that of armies combin'd.

To hope this, did I ſay? nay, to predict it with ſome aſſurance would be much more reaſonable; for if we look on this work chiefly on the ſide of difficulty, the greateſt part of it is already done: It being beyond compariſon more arduous for a few to conquer the allurements of vice, and break through the obſtacles of prevailing faſhion, than for numbers to follow them, when they have ſucceſsfully begun.

SOME praiſe is indeed due to theſe laſt, and a greater degree of happineſs will accrue from their conduct to the State; yet the merit of the whole does in a great meaſure revert to their principals and leaders: And if there are any ſuch things as general affection, univerſal eſteem, and immortal honours, the fulleſt portion of them all ſhould be unanimouſly pour'd out upon the firſt ſubduers of national vice: Eſpe-

cially if this vice was ſo ſubtle and inſinuating, ſo reputable and ſo powerful, that it beſet them in their houſes, in the city, and at the court; that their families and relations, their dependants and acquaintance, nay, their conſtituents and their friends call'd ſo loud for it's continuance, that the lapſe to it was in a manner natural, even in thoſe favourable moments, when their fortitude was the ſtrongeſt, and their purpoſe the moſt reſolv'd.

CHAP.

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the power of belief in the Chriſtian Religion.*

I Am now to ſhew that a firm belief of the Chriſtian Religion has the greateſt tendency to make us zealous for the community, and courageous in it's defence: And it will not be difficult to clear up this point from the very nature of the objections that are brought againſt it; which being of different and even oppoſite complexions, will have the leſs probability of being true.

Now in the firſt place, it has been often objected to the Chriſtian faith, that it does not command the love of our friends or our country by any particular commands, or encourage them by any particular alluſions; and it has as rightly been anſwered, that theſe leſſer affections are all ſwallow'd up in that full and comprehenſive one to the whole human Species.

BUT though no religion is ſo remarkable for this general benevolence, yet it is not without ſome particular exhortations to a ſuperior degree of affection to our kinsfolk and relations, and eſpecially to thoſe of the houſhold of faith: Now a greater degree of affection to theſe does neceſſarily imply a greater degree of it to our country, as the foundation of both is the ſame, which is their ſtanding in a nearer relation to us than the reſt of mankind.

AS beſides this, Chriſt introduc'd his Religion during the exiſtence of civil eſtabliſhments, and was more eſpecially ſolicitous for the welfare and proſperity of that under which he lived: As the Apoſtles likewiſe tread exactly in their Maſter's ſteps; as they always ſpeak with reverence and eſteem on their adopted country, and with earneſtneſs and affection on their native; on all theſe accounts, the gradation of love in the Chriſtian ſyſtem ſtands thus: Love to our enemies; Love to mankind;

Love

Love to our country: Love to our enemies in a leſſer degree, as part of our Species, though they have injur'd or provok'd us: Love to mankind in a greater degree, as we have receiv'd from them no injury, and are connected with them by the ties of our common nature; but Love to our country in the greateſt degree of all, as it may juſtly be conſider'd as that political veſſel, in which our friends and our families, and all that is dear to us is at once embark'd: And though a greater love to the two former is recommended to us by Chriſtianity, than any other ſyſtem of religion, on which account the laſt muſt receive ſome conſiderable diminution, yet this diminution is only ſuch as may ſerve to reduce it to it's proper pitch, and cut off thoſe redundances, which make it dangerous to our neighbours, and partial to ourſelves.

An objection of a quite contrary nature has ſtill been made to Chriſtianity on account of the ſtreſs that is laid on faith,

and

and it's forcible exhortations to earneſtneſs and zeal; which have extinguiſh'd, they ſay, all the ſocial affections, and laid the foundation of bigotry, of violence, and perſecution.

How they have been abus'd, and what miſchiefs they have occaſion'd, is beſide the preſent purpoſe to enquire: But if we are commanded to be zealous for our Religion, and have a ſuperior degree of affection for our country; and if moreover, this religion makes a part of the conſtitution, and eſpecially ſuch a part of it, as it does with us; from all this will reſult juſt ſuch a portion of the trueſt zeal, as is ſufficient to make us earneſt for our country's good, without flying out into thoſe unjuſtifiable tranſports of ſome antient Patriots, who ſeem'd content to purchaſe victory to one particular people by the maſſacre and deſolation of the whole world beſides.

THE reſult therefore of the whole matter is, that the love for our country on the Chriſtian plan, not puſhing us on to

oppreſs

oppreſs our neighbours on the one hand; and zeal for our Religion, not inciting us to perſecute them on the other; but being both conſiſtent with the natural rights and privileges of our fellow-creatures; we ſhall of conſequence be warm without violence, and ſteady without phlegm; we ſhall have the paſſion of a lover ſo peculiarly circumſtanc'd, that it will be always regular, and yet always ſtrong; that being founded on reaſon, will never be exceſſive, and being ſupported by duty, will never grow cool.

THIS is the true ſtate of a Proteſtant's love to his country; and then as to courage in defending it, which muſt mingle in large portions with zeal to make it beneficial and complete, I will venture to ſay, that no principles and no circumſtances ſince the foundation of the world, were ever ſo well calculated to incite it, as ſeveral parts of the Chriſtian ſyſtem: Let us touch upon two or three.

THERE is no diſciple of Chriſt, though in ever ſo mean and diſingenuous a vocation, but is taught yet to look upon himſelf as one of thoſe conſiderable beings for whom our Saviour died: He is taught likewiſe, that he is always under the eye and inſpection of that God, who records all his actions againſt the great day of accounts, and that he will not overlook the moſt ſecret cowardice, when it is his duty to combat on the ſide of virtue.

IF therefore the antients reflected, that it was a proper incitement to praiſe-worthy actions, for men to propoſe to themſelves ſome great exemplar, and to imagine that ſuch venerable and exalted characters as *Cato* and *Lælius* were ſpectators of their conduct; — how much greater encouragement muſt the like conſideration afford the good ſoldier of Chriſt, whoſe character is dignify'd by his amazing condeſcenſion; and who need not call upon any imaginary perſonage to inſpect his actions, when he

is under the fulleſt conviction, that the great Lord of the univerſe is a looker on?

BUT this is not all: He is farther taught in the ſacred writings on the head of Providence, that the conſtitution of things was at firſt moſt admirably ſuited to that multiplicity of uſes for which it was ordain'd; but becauſe it is not poſſible from the nature of free-will'd agents perverſely abuſing their liberty, that this order ſhould always be maintain'd, that therefore God is frequently interpoſing, and rectifying every deviation from the original deſign; ſo that there is nothing which happens to the virtuous and the good but what is beſt for them upon the whole.

NOW what virtuous man can be faint in ſuch a deſirable ſituation, where the ſtroke of chance is but an inſignificant ſound, and the malice of his fellow-creatures is but impotent rage? where the triumphs of victory, and the terrors of defeat have their commiſſions from above; and where he is in each caſe aſſur'd, that he is under the

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protection of heaven, and ſhall ſafely be conducted through the light of life, or ſhadow of death?

IF this opinion had been firmly admitted by many of the heroes of the Pagan world, what ardour and conſtancy had it given them in diſtreſs? how full indeed, on this conſideration, had the triumph of *Cato* been over the oppreſſors of his country? what different impreſſions in *Brutus*'s breaſt had this occaſion'd in the laſt moments of his life? nay, how animated would the courage of each private *Roman* have been with this ſtrong ſupport to the juſter ſide, this inſurmountable barrier to *Pompey*'s ambition, or *Cæſar*'s power?

BUT this peculiar advantage, which for good reaſons no doubt, was deny'd to the worthies of antient times, is for as good ones now conferr'd on the profeſſors of the Goſpel; and it is as eaſy now for a virtuous Chriſtian of common prudence and capacity, to behave himſelf as intrepidly in the horrors of war, as it was formerly for

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a virtuous heathen of the moſt conſummate conduct and reſolution.

BUT farther yet: What may perhaps be thought, (excluſive of a particular Providence) to be the principal foundation of this courage, and to give it ardor and duration in every the moſt extreme diſtreſs, is the contempt of this life, and the expectation of a better; both which no religion did ever yet ſo forcibly, and ſo rationally, inculcate as the Chriſtian.

THE compariſon of Chriſtians with the reſt of the world, and of conſequence their Superiority over them all, in theſe important points, ſhall be the Subject of the remaining part of this Diſcourſe.

IT is obſerv'd by a great and impartial Ancient, that two of the principal impediments to the performance of every thing excellent, are the Love of Money and the Love of Life: The converſe of this propoſition is almoſt univerſally as true, that two of the principal incitements to the attainment of illuſtrious actions, are the Con-

tempt of Money, and the Contempt of Life; and by no religion have theſe two qualities been ſo forcibly inculcated, or upon ſuch rational motives, as the Chriſtian.

THE *Spartans* and *Romans*, who muſt always be ſeparated from the herd of Mankind, when inſtances of perfection are required, were once the moſt remarkably conſpicuous for the practice of theſe principles; and while they were ſo, they perform'd the moſt hardy and enterprizing deeds of any nation in Story.

AND yet there are many particulars in which theſe people muſt on this head be inferior to Chriſtians: In the former, theſe qualities were inſtill'd by Education; in the latter, contracted from Principle: — In the one, they were in a manner mechanical in their operations; in the other, directed by reaſon and religion: — In the one, they often prompted to indiſcriminate valor; in the other, only to juſt and laudable conflicts: — In the one, they often prov'd hurtful, and ſometimes deſtructive to their Species;

Species; in the other they were generally uſeful, and always benevolent: — With the one there was little ſubſtituted in the room of life and abundance, but the Eſteem of the people; with the other, the Eulogy of the great Creator: — The one was to be recompens'd for the hardſhips they endured, by only living in the hearts of future generations; the other by a real and happy exiſtence in a better State: — In a word, the beſt reward of the one was, in effect, nought elſe but a leafy Crown, or a fading Garland; while that of the other was the manſions of Bliſs, and the joys of Eternity.

In this view therefore of the thing, the Chriſtians muſt certainly exceed in true fortitude the moſt valiant nations; but becauſe the contempt of life, from whatever cauſe it proceeds, is the point principally to be regarded here; let us on this head obſerve, that the *Saracens* and ancient *Goths* were ſome of the moſt remarkable nations of antiquity for prodigally expoſing them-

ſelves in the moſt deſperate engagements; and over theſe likewiſe the Chriſtians will be found to have the ſame Superiority, that was mention'd before.

FOR the one of theſe expected only groſs and ſenſual happineſs in a future life; the other refin'd and heavenly ſatisfactions: — The one depended on the authority of Impoſtors; the other on the veracity of the Son of God: — The one was inſtigated by Bigotry and Revenge; the other by Concord, by Charity, and Love: — The one might be ſtopp'd ſhort in their career of violence by temperate reflexion; the other would be encourag'd in their beneficent progreſs by virtuous conſiderations: — The one might ſuddenly wake from their dream of Enthuſiaſm; in which caſe the charm would break, and their fortitude would end; the other would go on from valor to valor, while Juſtice perſwaded, or Conſcience was heard: — In a word, the one might ſometimes fear that they were deluded in their hopes, and that theſe rewards

could

could not be dictated by God, which conſiſted only in wanton enjoyments, or quaffing ſweet and vindictive draughts from the ſculls of their Enemies; while the other grew more and more tranſported with the view of that full and conſummate bliſs, which was both agreeable to the expectations of the moſt heavenly minds, and as certain in it's Authority as God could make it.

It is eaſy to perceive from theſe compariſons, that the Chriſtians can never engage but in defenſive and neceſſary war; and indeed they cannot: Nor then neither, unleſs it be for the defence of important points, ſuch as life, liberty, or religion; nor then neither, but after repeated provocations; nor then neither, unleſs they have done nothing on their parts to bring them on; nor then neither, until they have long and patiently ſubmitted to them; 'till in the language of Scripture, *The cloak be taken together with the coat*; and to the ſmiter of the one cheek, we offer calmly the other.

But after all this, it is almoſt inconceivable to what prodigious heights the valor of Chriſtians can ariſe: One may almoſt compare it in the rapture of the Pſalmiſt to the Vengeance of JEHOVAH *awaking from Sleep, and like a Giant refreſhed with Wine.*

OR in the cooler expreſſions of more temperate reaſon, we may ſay of it with great juſtice, that it is like the anger of thoſe mild and gentle Spirits, which breaks out with fiercer and redoubled violence, the longer it has been kept in; whoſe courage is augmented, in proportion as their lenity has been abuſed; and who, at length, make their indignation ſmoke againſt that preſumptuous enemy, who underſtood not the force of meekneſs and forbearance, and fathom'd not the depth of the Pſalmiſt's obſervation, *There is mercy with thee, therefore ſhalt thou be fear'd.*

TO ſum up this argument: He that deſpiſes his own life is rightly ſaid to be Maſter of another Man's: That nation, which

which is prodigal of exiſtence in a greater degree, will always be victorious over another that is ſo in a leſs: — That nation, whoſe contempt of death is uniform and ſteady, and founded upon rational and virtuous motives, will be more victorious ſtill: But that nation, who begin not to exert their courage, till after numberleſs provocations; and then are confident, that from the arms of death they ſhall ſpring forward to eternity, will always be ſuperior to the fierceſt attacks that impotent Creatures can make.

To apply all this to ourſelves: We are Chriſtians; we are contemners of death; we have receiv'd repeated injuries from an inſulting enemy; we have patiently ſubmitted to them from time to time; we are at length engag'd in a neceſſary war; we are ſupporters of the rights and privileges of mankind: — And what weakneſſes can betray, what vices enervate, and what dangers affright us here? Shall toil and hardſhip? they are pleaſing to valor. Shall

fields of blood? they lead onward to heaven. Shall the love of pleaſure enfeeble us? it is incompatible with our principles. Shall corruption, or ſelfiſhneſs, ſhall luxury and ſloth, ſhall wantonneſs or ridicule? there is no room for them in the School of Chriſt. So that the reſult of the whole matter is, that we muſt either lay aſide the dread of our enemies, and our national vices, or elſe we muſt renounce the Chriſtian name.

BEHOLD that little and contemptible figure! examine that feeble and effeminate body! and yet hear what manly Sounds on a ſimilar occaſion his faith can utter! *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or anguiſh, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Shall life, or death, or Angels, or principalities, or powers, or things preſent, or things to come? Nay, in all theſe things we are more than Conquerors, through him that lov'd us.*

AND

AND that this was not only empty and unmeaning declamation on the tendency of his religion; that it was not a courage only of ſwelling words and pompous expreſſion; that it was not taken up during the heat of fancy and ebullition of zeal, but diſſipated as reaſon and reflexion took place; that it was not in ſhort that of a more faint-hearted diſciple, which was determin'd to death in the ardor of affection; but ſunk into nothing, according to his Maſter's prediction, as the Storm came on, will be farther apparent from the dreadful catalogue of complicated misfortunes which he really underwent; and which is recorded in the *Corinthians* for our admonition, *on whom the ends of the World are come.*

NEITHER is this a rare and unparallel'd inſtance of one inſpired Apoſtle, ſupported by Heaven in the moſt extraordinary tryals: Whole bodies of Chriſtians, in the purer ages, have bore up in circumſtances equally deſperate, and offer'd themſelves to dangers,

dangers, impriſonments, and death, with a fortitude and reſolution that is equal, at leaſt, to what the warmeſt imagination could poſſibly form from the foregoing principles.

THEY had indeed no country to defend againſt lawleſs Invaders, and their paſſion for martyrdom was ſo violent and ſtrong, that it carried them perhaps to greater lengths than their religion required: But a ſmall alteration of circumſtances would have eaſily reduc'd this prodigality of life to it's proper pitch in the field of battle; and *we* only are in that critical, and to theſe Spirits in that envy'd Situation, as to be able to fall Martyrs in that beſt and trueſt cauſe, the defence of Liberty and Religion combin'd.

AND yet in all probability theſe Martyrdoms will be fewer for the reſolution to undergo them: And thoſe who come againſt us with offenſive weapons, with tyrannical views, and unchriſtian diſpoſitions, will never be able to ſupport their claims

claims with that ſteadineſs and uniformity, that laſting conſtancy and unbroken vigor, which are the ſure concomitants of the Goſpel principles. — Nay, on the contrary, theſe principles, if they be rightly conſider'd, will in the day of diſtreſs riſe up againſt them, and impreſs equal languor and deadneſs on them, as they muſt ſtrength and vivacity on us; inaſmuch as they muſt be convinc'd by them, that Providence will incline to the juſter ſide, and that Death then becomes the moſt dreadful of Evils, when it leads on the Wicked to eternal perdition.

In one word; if we be earneſt in the belief of our Religion, and walk worthy of the vocation to which we are call'd, our Succeſs is indubitable, and our Superiority certain; and neither watery walls, nor numerous fleets; neither powerful armies, nor faithful allies; neither accumulated wealth, nor united hearts, can be half ſo efficacious in diſtreſsful circumſtances as that acquieſcence in hardſhip, and contempt

tempt of death; that generous Mind and unconquerable Spirit that Chriſtianity inſpires.

BUT here perhaps it will be ſaid, that we muſt probably have exaggerated the efficacy of the Chriſtian Syſtem, and in ſome degree painted it above the life; ſince no ſuch Effects as thoſe we have deſcrib'd are at preſent ſeen thro' the whole Chriſtian world: They being altogether as ſubject to vain fears and perturbations, altogether as captivated by deluſive vanities, and altogether as abhorrent of hardſhip and diſſolution, as the reſt of their fellow-creatures.

THE fact it muſt be own'd is in a great meaſure as true, as the inference from it is falſe; ſince nothing can be more unreaſonable than to with-hold from any Syſtem it's genuin product, becauſe the lives of it's Profeſſors are inconſiſtent with it's tenets.

I muſt now therefore ſhew, that the defect is not in Chriſtianity, but our Belief:

lief: Yet as we have a long time been us'd to call ourſelves Chriſtians; as we often imagine ourſelves to be ſo, when we really are not: As we are apt to account for the incongruities of our lives, on other principles than thoſe of infidelity; but above all, as this ſource of our national Vices has been but ſlightly touch'd upon, I muſt, on all theſe accounts, take ſome Compaſs for the proof of this point.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Objections to the foregoing Chapter.*

THO' I am myſelf moſt firmly perſuaded, that the reaſoning in the laſt Chapter is built on ſure and ſteadfaſt principles, and that a full conviction of the doctrines of the Goſpel is conſtantly and neceſſarily productive of that zeal and courage which are *there* deſcrib'd, as well as every other perfection and virtue; yet, as the contrary has been maintain'd by men of the firſt rank in Literature; and it has been even affirm'd, that faith has not the leaſt connexion either with Virtue or Courage, or any other great and praiſeworthy action, it is fit that we ſhould both hear and anſwer the objection.

THE Sum of it as contained in many ſcatter'd obſervations of an * acute Philoſopher, is briefly this: (*ſc.*) That the different vices and virtues of mankind do, for

* *Bayle.*

the

the moſt part, take their Colour from their different temperature and complexion; the different modes and cuſtoms of their country, and the caſual hits and contingencies of their lives; that their principles and perſuaſions have not ſo great an influence on them, as is generally imagin'd; that it is common for men to act above their principles in ſome caſes, and below them in others, without giving any room to ſuſpect that they do not really admit them; that it is eaſy to conceive a bad Chriſtian and a good Atheiſt, tho' the one as certainly believes in Chriſt, as the other diſbelieves a God; that moreover, it is found by daily experience, that all men in ſome part of their lives thro' paſſion, fear or ſurprize, act againſt the fulleſt conviction; and that this ſeems to be the caſe with many Chriſtians, who, tho' they are ſcandalouſly profligate and abandon'd in their practice, yet frequently betray the cleareſt Symptoms of belief, nay, and are credulous even to Superſtition."

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THE chief difficulty in this Syſtem, in regard to our preſent point, lies in the obſervation, that men often indulge their paſſions, when they know it will do them harm: This is undeniable; but then the truth is, they chooſe to enjoy a preſent pleaſure, and undergo a future pain, becauſe the balance they look upon to be pleaſure: Or, if this cannot be the caſe when the pain is the greateſt; yet it is thought to be ſo, becauſe the pleaſure is preſent, and the pain future: But now increaſe this future pain to ſome conſiderable degree, and their reſolution may begin to waver; increaſe it an hundred fold, and this reſolution may perhaps be quite overcome; if not yet, make the pain eternal, and there can be no diſpute.

INDEED, if this pain, beſide it's being future, is look'd upon as uncertain alſo; *i. e.* if men do not firmly and ſteadily believe it's exiſtence, then it is no wonder that eternal puniſhments themſelves ſhould be frequently overlook'd: And here lies

the principal defect in this Philoſopher's ſyſtem.

IT may be incumbent upon me to clear up this point by his own method, and the beſt, that of inſtances and examples.

I ſay then in the firſt place, that it is the conduct of reaſonable beings in general, who are duly convinc'd of any probable truth, to be commonly influenced, guided and directed agreeably to that conviction.

THUS the merchant, who is perſwaded, that at the end of a weariſom voyage he ſhall advance his fortunes; and the husbandman, who is perſwaded, that at the return of the ſeaſon he ſhall receive his ſeed with increaſe, bear each of them the fatigues of their reſpective employments, and may rightly be ſaid in the language of Scripture, *both to plough and trafic in hope.*

THERE are indeed a few ſeeming exceptions to this, which may be accounted for on the principles juſt now mention'd; it muſt be admitted however as a certain truth, that this is the common and ordi-

nary conduct of mankind in cases of this nature: When therefore they do not observe the same conduct in their Christian course, it is a fair presumption that they are not actuated by the same principle.

MORE particularly: Eternal life is to a *Christian* what gain is to the *Merchant*, and increase of seed to the *Husbandman*; only with this difference, that the reward is infinitely greater: When therefore *they* prosecute their temporal concerns with *ardor*, and *he* his eternal one with *indifferency*: Nay, when *they* make use of means that are properly suited to attain *their* ends, and he makes use of means directly contrary to the attainment of *his*: It is no improbable argument that his faith is defective.

BUT Secondly: This point receives yet an additional degree of proof, by considering farther the natural alliance between infidelity and the vices prevalent among Christians.

THUS,

THUS, ſays an excellent * judge, it is infidelity that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, diſcontented, puſillanimous, and impatient.

BECAUSE men believe not Providence; therefore they do ſo greedily ſcrape and hoard: — They do not believe any reward for charity; therefore they will part with nothing: — They do not hope for ſuccour from God; therefore they are diſcontented: — They have nothing to raiſe their ſpirits; therefore they are abject.

AS this may be thought too general, I will preſs the inſtance of covetouſneſs more particularly.

THE end then of the covetous man is indiſputably the increaſe of gain; and on this his heart is ſo paſſionately ſet, that he truſts, even to faithleſs men, and ſecurities liable to a thouſand accidents, purely from the greater probability of accompliſhing his deſign: And yet tell him of the gain of

* *Barrow.*

Eternity, for which too he has the promiſe of God, who *cannot lye*, and he is not affected by it at all.

Now what probable ſolution can there be of his purſuing ſo ardently the treaſures of the earth, and neglecting ſo abſurdly thoſe of heaven; but that he has a firm perſuaſion of the exiſtence of the one, and doubts at leaſt, and ſcruples about the exiſtence of the other?

To ſay, as it is ſaid often, that it is the diſtance only of theſe laſt that makes them totally diſregarded, is the groſſeſt contradiction to the general practice of mankind: Every thing diſtant, which in their expectation is likely to happen, has it's due influence over their conduct: Old age borders upon Death, and Death upon Eternity; yet proviſion is made only for the firſt, while the laſt is neglected: Why? but becauſe the one is known to be the lot of humanity, the other look'd upon as only an uncertain promiſe.

BUT it will be expected of us perhaps to diſpute this matter with *Bayle* rather from *his* inſtances than our *own:* Let us therefore ſelect one of the ſtrongeſt that he has brought to prove his point.

THE tender mother then who has been educated in the principles of the Chriſtian faith, and yet in oppoſition to theſe principles for fear of human laws, ſheds herſelf the blood of her own off-ſpring, is thought to be one, whoſe conduct meets with no probable ſolution, but upon a ſuppoſition, that to avoid a preſent infamy, which ſhe ſees directly before her, ſhe renders herſelf liable to eternal puniſhment, which ſhe certainly believes, but ſees at a diſtance: And we muſt acknowlege, that ſhe believes it; becauſe it was a tenet ſhe was brought up in, and never diſputed it in her own mind, nor heard it diſputed by others.

THOUGH this latter part is not certain, yet it may be granted, that the belief ſhe was brought up in remains with her: But then this horrid action ſhews what a kind

of belief it was; and it will be farther ſhewn by a caſe that reaches numbers of the like ſort.

THE ſeparate exiſtence, if not the immortality of the ſoul, is a principle that not only Chriſtians, but men of all denominations have been brought up in; and moſt of them have never ſeen any reaſon to doubt this matter, or indeed have ask'd themſelves about it at all: And yet the very ſight of their departed friend ſeems to ſhake this principle to it's foundation; for otherwiſe we cannot conceive why they not only mourn over him at preſent like one that has ceas'd from being, but ſpeak of him afterwards in their cooler moments with the ſame ſymptoms of deſpair.

THE belief therefore that weeps over an immortal ſoul as if it was extinct, and the belief which for fear of a preſent infamy, ſinks the tender Parent into Hell, are two ſorts of principles, which however they may be called faith, in effect, differ little from total infidelity.

NEITHER

NEITHER will that ſubterfuge avail, that in weeping over our deceaſed friend, we lament our own misfortune: Since it is ſuch a ſubterfuge as contradicts the very nature of things. The voice of nature, in terms of pity and commiſeration, is too ſtrongly mark'd to take a different form from the ſuggeſtions of art; nor is it at all more abſurd, to ſay, that we call ourſelves *wicked*, when we apply that Epithet to a villain, than to ſay, that we call ourſelves *wretched*, when we apply that Epithet to the dead.

THERE is a farther illuſtration of all this in a celebrated paſſage in one of *Cicero*'s philoſophical treatiſes, where the truth of what we have now drawn from the ſilent practice, or unwary paſſions of men, is wonderfully confirm'd by plain acknowledgement and audible confeſſion.

THE heathen in that dialogue, who was more at liberty than Chriſtians to deliver his ſentiments on the immortality of the ſoul, ſays, that while he was reading *Plato*'s

treatiſe on that ſubject, he was in ſome meaſure perſwaded of the truth of his opinion; but that his aſſent quite vaniſh'd as ſoon as he laid it down.

To account for this, we muſt ſuppoſe, what *Seneca* has in ſome meaſure explain'd in a parallel paſſage, that the heathen, meeting in *Plato*'s treatiſe with ſome plauſible reaſons, which conſpired with the high opinion that men conceive of their ſouls, and their natural deſire of future exiſtence, he acquir'd as it were a ſort of temporary perſwaſion of their truth; but as ſoon as he look'd again on the diſorder'd face of things among his fellow-creatures, and eſpecially on the ſad and melancholy ſymptoms of diſſolution in common to them with other animals, this perſuaſion died away.

This with ſome ſmall variation of circumſtances is the caſe with the Chriſtians we are conſidering. Having a due degree of veneration for the Religion they were brought up in; having never heard any principle

ciple of it diſputed, and naturally wiſhing for the immortality it promiſes, they give ſome faint ſort of aſſent to it's truth: But this aſſent not being ſtrong enough to bear them up amidſt the exigencies of life, it vaniſhes into nothing before the alarms of danger, or allurements of ſin.

THIS reaſoning will help us to another example urg'd with great vehemence by the objector, though in truth it differs not much from the preceding: This inſtance is, that many profligate Chriſtians amongſt the Catholics have recourſe in danger to images and relics, and have ſuperſtitiouſly plac'd a confidence in their aid, when all human meaſures have fail'd; from whence it is inferr'd, that they have a belief in theſe, and of conſequence in Chriſtianity alſo. — Indeed their belief in both is the ſame; and while they flatter their pride, promiſe them ſupport, or bring no interruption to their pleaſures, they act as if their belief in them was real: But when they croſs their intereſt, curb their appetites,

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and thwart their inclinations, the caſe is altogether chang'd; and it is well if the relics once ſo much honour'd are not treated at laſt with the ſame contempt as that impotent god in the Fable, which fell a ſacrifice to the fury of it's importunate ſolicitor, for not being able to hear and aſſiſt him.

I could if it was neceſſary confirm this reaſoning by a great variety of parallel inſtances; but it may be more proper to confirm it by the beſt ſupport in all diſputable caſes, and that is, by real experience and fact; by the examples of thoſe great and illuſtrious forerunners in the Chriſtian courſe already mention'd, who having firſt believ'd their Religion in the purity it was taught, proceeded of conſequence to practiſe it with the ſteadineſs it was believed.

AND here, and here only, ſince the foundation of Chriſtianity, is to be ſeen the mighty power and efficacy of faith in the happy production of every grace, and every virtue; in gentleneſs, in meekneſs, in

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forbearance and humility; in forgiveneſs, in charity, in ſincerity and truth; in temperance, in patience, in fortitude and conſtancy; in neglect of riches, in ſubmiſſion to injuries, in contempt of death, and confidence in God.

THE time would fail me, ſooner than it did the Apoſtle in his illuſtrious catalogue of the *Old* teſtament worthies, were I to inſiſt on all the eminent gifts and virtues of the *New*: Let it ſuffice that they both together make up that *Cloud of Witneſſes*, whoſe ſtrength of evidence no arguments can reſiſt, no arts elude, and no gloſſes explain away: Who through faith, and faith only, in the emphatical language of the Apoſtle, ſubdued kingdoms, wrought righteouſneſs, obtain'd promiſes, ſtopp'd the mouths of lions; were ſtoned, were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword; wander'd about in ſheep ſkins, and goat ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented.

AND

AND now what will the boldeſt objector be able to ſay to theſe things? to deny their exiſtence, is to contradict the ſtream of all hiſtory both ſacred and profane; — to impute them to any thing but faith, will never admit of any probable ſolution; — to ſay that this faith was viſionary and romantic, and not warranted by the genius of the Goſpel, is to betray the profoundeſt ignorance in the doctrines of Chriſt: — To ſay that faith might not be able to produce ſuch effects in one age as it did in another, is denying the conſtancy of the ſame cauſes, without aſſigning any reaſon for their variation: — To give ſome ſhew of reaſon for this from the prevalency of example, is loſing even that ſhew before example did begin: — To come nearer yet to the real ſtate of things, and ſay, that in the various degrees of faith, the primitive Chriſtians poſſeſs'd the higheſt, and the preſent the loweſt, is not true in their ſenſe; becauſe the loweſt degree of faith is ſuppos'd to be a full perſwaſion of the divi-

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nity of the Goſpel; and the higheſt can be no more: — To confeſs then at laſt, that the firſt ages had uniformly this perſwaſion, and theſe latter ages fall ſhort of it, is in effect the whole of what we are contending for; and is in effect the only refuge the objectors themſelves can find.

FOR what does this confeſſion mean? that this faith is irreſolute and feeble? that it fluctuates and wavers? that it wants the force and ſteadineſs of conviction? that it riſes and ſinks by fits? that it is influenc'd by outward cauſes? that it is diſſipated by pleaſure, and ſhrinks before pain? that it differs with times and ſeaſons? is a faith of Sabbaths and new moons, and ſhines out or is overcaſt by the correſponding brightneſs or gloom of the ſun? that the little life which animates it is often utterly extinct? that it has fantaſtic ſucceſſions of living and dying; and like the fabled Soul of the * Philoſopher, goes out, and returns

* *Ariſteas*, who in ancient hiſtory is ſaid to have given this odd account of his Soul.

at

at random? In a word, that it is deficient in ſome part, and comes not up to it's true and genuin Standard? — Here then, at laſt, is diſcover'd that ſpring of bitterneſs, that certain Source from whence have flow'd all thoſe numerous Evils, which ſo long have delug'd the Chriſtian world.

So that the reſult of the above-mention'd reaſoning at length centers here, that the firſt Chriſtians, who liv'd ſuitably to their profeſſion, had a ſteadfaſt and entire conviction of the truths of the Goſpel; and we, who live unſuitably, have *not:* i. e. *they* had faith, and *we* have doubt; and cloſe by the ſide of doubt ſits utter infidelity; and round infidelity is ſcatter'd confuſion, and every evil work.

SEEST thou then, as *Solomon* ſays, *a man wiſe in his own eyes, ambitious and vain?* In ſpite of his pretences, he is aſham'd of the humility of the Goſpel. Seeſt thou one that is worldly-minded, hear his Character from the Apoſtle, *Demas hath forſaken me, having loved the preſent World.* — Seeſt thou a co-

vetous man? Unerring Wiſdom itſelf hath long ſince pronounc'd him an Idolater: Seeſt thou a Prodigal laviſh of his ſubſtance, and careleſs of his family? *He has deny'd his faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* Seeſt thou one full of Guile and Diſſimulation? let him plead what he will for his Faith, it conſiſts not with Hypocriſy. Seeſt thou a mind implacable and revengeful? The ſpirit of Chriſtianity dwells not there. Seeſt thou one afraid of death? Immortality is on his tongue; but Diſſolution, or worſe than Diſſolution, is at his heart.

BUT yet for all this, thou wilt ſtill perhaps fondly and pertinaciouſly object, that it is not ſo, and that the fear of death is but natural; this is granted; but ſo it was to the primitive Chriſtians. Yes; but they had nothing to fear. This is granted likewiſe: But what produc'd this freedom from fear? the goodneſs of their lives. But what produc'd this goodneſs of life? Enthuſiaſm. But how can ſuch regular and conſtant Effects be imputed to this? and how could

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it burn with a flame ſo pure, ſo ſeraphic and conſtant, for three hundred years? But be this acknowledg'd likewiſe. What gave birth to this holy Enthuſiaſm? Was it of blood? impoſſible: Was it from infection? How did the generous infection begin? from principle? What was this vital and animating Principle, which could thus lead millions to the Throne of Grace? What but that which alone is capable of ſuch bleſſed Effects, a ſtrong, a vigorous, and a lively faith?

O Faith, thou Guardian of a Chriſtian's virtue! Thou ſource and fountain of all his joy! Thou balm that healeſt the ills of life! Thou beam that lighteſt us thro' the vale of death! By thee we conquer the allurements of ſin; by thee we ſcorn the temptations of the world; by thee we quench the darts of Satan; by thee, with confidence, we have acceſs to God: — By thee, in ſhort, with the * Martyr's Eye, we

* St. *Stephen* the Proto-Martyr.

view

view the regions of the bleſſed, and burſt thro' the impediments of the preſent ſtate to the joys of eternity.

IF the Reader ſhould not yet agree with me in this religious rapture, and requires ſome freſh light to be thrown upon this Subject, it will be eaſy to indulge him.

AS therefore the Scripture itſelf may be ſuppos'd to give the beſt account of the faith it requires, and more eſpecially as all the above-mention'd reaſoning will receive the beſt confirmation of it, from the definition of it *there* given; let us hear it in our tranſlation.

*Faith is the Subſtance of things hoped for, the Evidence of things not ſeen.*

THIS is obſcure, and ſeems made ſo by the Tranſlators without reaſon, as the word υποστασις has in three places a different ſignification in the New Teſtament, and in all thoſe places is rightly render'd by the Tranſlators. The places referr'd to are, 2 *Cor.* ix. 4. xi. 17. *Heb.* iii. 14. where the Reader will find the words of the verſion

to be, as they ought, *earneſt expectation*. And the word ελεγχος, which ſignifies *proof*, or *argument*, may be very properly render'd here *conviction*; from which premiſes the whole will ſtand thus: Faith is the earneſt expectation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not ſeen.

It ought not to be omitted here, that the *Geneva* verſion has it thus, *Faith is the lively repreſentation or ſubſiſtence* &c. and the Compoſers of our Liturgy had probably the ſame meaning in thoſe ſo much cenſur'd expreſſions, *ſure* and *certain hope*.

From all which it ſhould ſeem, that Faith is ſuch a full and ſteadfaſt conviction, as in a manner ſets before the believer the unſeen things of the other world, as if they were ſeen. And this is the true faith, which the Scriptures require; which the firſt Chriſtians had; and which we, by all proper means, ſhould endeavour to attain.

But I am aware that it may yet be ſaid, that as all Faith muſt depend upon Evi-

dence,

dence, to believe or not believe is not always in our power; this not being ſo much a matter of will, as neceſſity; not ſo much of choice, as conviction.

THERE will be very little reaſon to controvert this objection, when it is for the honour of Chriſtianity, that it requires it to be true; having, like all other reaſonable Syſtems, the prepollent weight of Evidence on it's ſide, it demands only the ſame means as every other probable truth for it's admiſſion: Theſe in general are an impartial Mind, a proper Examination, and a candid Diſpoſition.

WITH *all* theſe qualities, Let the whole tribe of infidels approach our altars, and the hardieſt of them will own, that in proportion as they advance, the clouds which they imagin'd to be about them, diſappear; and celeſtial light and ſerenity ſucceed: And then as to thoſe numbers of nominal Chriſtians, who live contrary to their faith, *one* of the above-mention'd qualities is ſufficient for their converſion;

for it is the want of conſideration only, to which their total or gradual infidelity is chiefly to be aſcrib'd.

In one word, the Sum of what is contain'd in the two laſt chapters, is briefly this: If we proceed in the method juſt mention'd, there is ſcarce a poſſibility of diſbelieving: And if we believe, we muſt of neceſſity prove thoſe ſtrong and inſurmountable barriers of the Public Weal, which we have already deſcribed: Since no * one people in the world, who had a belief ſimilar to it, however unjuſtly founded, have ever, while it had poſſeſſion of their hearts, been found to fail.

* See what has been obſerv'd above on the *Goths* and *Saracens*.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Other objections to the principal deſign.*

AS I have now done with the ſeveral motives I propos'd to conſider; and the ſhortneſs of the treatiſe does not require any recapitulation of what has been laid together in the ſeveral chapters, I will juſt mention three plauſible objections that may be made to the whole, and then cloſe it with ſome ſhort but pathetic application.

THE firſt is, that if we actually arrive at Zeal, thro' the ſeveral ſteps that we have recommended, we muſt of neceſſity become ſo ſaturnine and ſevere, ſo averſe to raillery, feſtivity, and mirth; ſo apprehenſive of danger from every quarter, and ſo perpetually on our guard againſt the allurements of gain, that it will in effect cut off all the happineſs of our lives; and in that caſe, there can be little difference, whether we be freemen, or ſlaves.

THE objection is what could only be urg'd with any degree of confidence by ſuch lovers of pleaſure, as were unable to break thro' the ſhackles of habit, and look only upon the ſurface of things without capacity, or without reflexion.

FOR the beneficent Father and Maker of us all has not been ſo unequal in his Diſpenſations towards his Creatures, as to confine happineſs to ſome certain tempers, or ſome certain pleaſures: The Serious and the Grave have an equal portion of it, with the Jovial and the Gay; and it is mingled with various and even oppoſite amuſements in the ſame weight, and the ſame meaſure, tho' with different complexions, and under different forms.

ON this plan therefore, the zealous and public-ſpirited would not be at a loſs to find a ſeries of new pleaſures, equal, at leaſt, to thoſe they had left; what was wanted in frequency, would be made up in intenſeneſs; and what was wanting in ſenſe, would be made up by reaſon: — If they

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loſt their variety, it would fully be compenſated by a more ſubſtantial ſameneſs; and if they loſt their fierce and tumultuous ſallies, they would be amply recompens'd by ſweet complacency, ſerenity, and order.

THIS would be the caſe on a ſuppoſition of equal virtue, and equal ſecurity, in theſe different purſuits; but the advantage, in both theſe reſpects, is on the ſide of the zealous; and they would not only enjoy their order, and claſs of pleaſures with rational delight, and conſcious approbation; but would be almoſt ſure that they would laſt, if accompany'd by zeal, to the end of time.

A ſecond objection is this: We have all along ſuppos'd, that the Proteſtant religion and Civil eſtabliſhment, being intimately mix'd, make up together a whole, and that both are ſo excellent, as to appeal only to our reaſon for admittance; yet it has generally been obſerv'd, that approbation, founded on rational motives, ſeldom riſes to zeal; and that men, in all ages, have

been much more zealous for ſhew than ſubſtance, and for impoſture than truth.

It were needleſs to dwell long on this objection to Chriſtians, who being convinc'd that their religion is of all others the moſt excellent, know likewiſe that in the beſt ages the zeal for it was as eminent: Let us therefore oppoſe this better example to thoſe juſt intimated; and let us, as becomes us, not find fault with, but copy it: Let it not be ſaid to our reproach and infamy, that our cauſe was good, and our love for it but faint: And if it has hitherto been with ſome juſtice obſerv'd, that a rational faith has often been unattended with a ſuitable warmth, let us from henceforth roll away this reproach of Proteſtantiſm from amongſt us; let us ſhew forth to the world by our conduct and example, that for men at once to be zealous and moderate is no Soleciſm in religion; and that the firmneſs of a Martyr, and the mildneſs of a Proteſtant, is no impoſſible conjunction.

THE laſt and greateſt objection to all this is, that if falſe zeal, as we have already ſhewn, can produce the ſame effect as the true; where is the uſe of what has been advanc'd? And how can we, who are influenc'd by the one, be ſecure from our oppreſſors who are influenc'd by the other?

NOW ſuppoſing this to be true in it's utmoſt extent, it is ſo far from being an argument why we ought *not* to put on this diſpoſition, that it is the ſtrongeſt reaſon in the world why we *ought:* If nothing but zeal can encounter zeal, we muſt either make uſe of it againſt the violence of our enemies, or ſuffer them to attack us with ſuch ſuperiour advantage, as muſt certainly end in our deſtruction.

BUT this, bleſſed be God, is quite otherwiſe, and, except in a few particular caſes, contrary to the uſual courſe of things, it will always be found that men are much more zealous for defence than conqueſt: And the reaſon of this is plain; becauſe they

they who fight for conqueſt, fight generally for what they can eaſily do without, and what will ſometimes prove a burthen; whereas they who fight for defence fight generally for all that is valuable to them in the world, and without which of conſequence life is cheap, and will be prodigally expoſed.

ADD to this, that falſe zeal is a monſtrous and extravagant paſſion, neither founded in reaſon nor ſupported by duty; that it's efforts indeed are violent, but it is the violence of one in agonies, and that after it's ſhort tumults and convulſions are over, it would naturally expire, except when it was kept up by proſtitute arts, or led on by rigorous and uncontroulable power: Yet that neither this art nor this power could ever give it a very long continuance, except where many other extraordinary circumſtances concurred to it's preſervation. — But true zeal is a ſober and regular paſſion, which is agreeable to the appetites, the reaſon, and the heart; whoſe

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power is laſting, and whoſe purpoſe is ſteady; which improves upon the taſte, and is ſtrengthened by continuance; which the more it is conſidered, muſt appear more lovely, as having it's foundation in nature, and wanting no favourable juncture of affairs to cheriſh or ſupport it. In ſhort, to uſe a moſt common and well known compariſon, it may with the ſtricteſt propriety be obſerved, that the one is like the immoderate diffuſion of falſe and unnatural fire which ariſes from ſtrong and inebriating draughts, and which but elevates the heart to ſink into inaction, or diſſolve into grief: Whereas the other is like the pleaſing and agreeable effect of a temperate refreſhment, which is neither ſucceeded by languor, nor attended with fury; but which communicates it's heat by gentle degrees, and inſenſibly warms and invigorates the whole conſtitution.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIII.

### *Concluſion and application of the whole.*

AND now let me appeal to the few friends of Liberty and pure Religion that are yet remaining in the world; and let me pathetically ask them, what can be ſaid to all the examples that have been produc'd?

FOR ſhall we acknowledge in ſo many inſtances the power of *falſe* zeal, and not be influenced by the *true?* ſhall our aſpiring neighbours be led by it to tyranny, and not we to liberty? they to Popery, and not we to Proteſtantiſm? ſhall it inſpire ſome with the wild deſire of conqueſt, and not us with the natural one of defence?

SHALL an aſſaſſin die at the command of his ſuperiour, and not we at the command of God? ſhall the former hearken to the voice of phrenſy, and not we to the voice of reaſon?

SHALL the Chriſtian *ruſh* with *impetuous raptures* to the mad expedition of the Holy Land? and ſhall not we engage with *ſoberer* heat and more *temperate* courage in the ſacred cauſe of our country and our God?

SHALL the *Saracen* rage with *tumultuous ſallies* in the fields of death, ſupported only by the mean expectation of a ſenſual reward, and that built upon a weak and contemptible foundation? and ſhall not we approach *them* with *ſerenity* and *order*, who are influenced by a reward which before has been ſhewn to be both agreeable to the expectations of the moſt heavenly minds, and as certain in it's authority as God can make it?

BUT what? if theſe examples are not ſufficient for our information, or we refuſe to be inſtructed from ſuch *deteſtable* proceedings; yet ſhall not we partake of thoſe exſtatic feelings in common with the true and diſtinguiſhed patriots of every age? ſhall we not be ſtruck with the *Roman* greatneſs, and *Spartan* reſolution? ſhall we not

not be *fired* with the *Hollanders* courage, and riſe with their vigorous and ſprightly hopes in the day of tribulation? above all, ſhall not the great example of our Anceſtors moſt powerfully excite in us this *glow* of heart? and ſhall not we be aſhamed of deſerting that cauſe, which could inſpirit with liberty the *ſervile French*, and warm with tranſports the *phlegmatic German?*

In effect, how little my dear countrymen, is required to ſecure our independance to the end of time?

For to ſum up all that has been ſaid.— It is almoſt impoſſible to conquer a Proteſtant Nation united and zealous for liberty and religion; *i. e.* united and zealous for ſuch excellent principles as are the very perfection of our happineſs, and glory of our nature: — And if a *falſe* zeal for Popery, and a *falſe* union for tyranny have enabled men to break through ſo many difficulties to oppreſs us; what ſuperiority may not we expect when the *true* ones influence

fluence us in our defence? when reaſon informs our zeal, and zeal animates our reſolution? when no tranſports but what are juſtifiable excite, and no enthuſiaſm but what is ſacred inflames? when no wild and extravagant deſires of conqueſt poſſeſs our hearts, no gratification of cruel and blood-thirſty tyrants unites our hands? when no grievance, in ſhort, either eccleſiaſtical or civil is mixed with the moſt perfect and excellent cauſe, nothing but what the very beſt and wiſeſt of men would in their cooleſt and moſt deliberate moments even chooſe to follow?

WHEN once we *are arrived at this important* point (and it is time that we begin to advance to it with impetuous ſtrides) we ſhall in all probability want no other aſſiſtance, and no other ſecurity; and though ſome obſtacle may ſeem to oppoſe this progreſs on account of that great number of Catholics, who in the midſt of a generous and good-natured people are freely allowed the profeſſion of a religion incon-

inconſiſtent with the rights and privileges they enjoy; yet it is to be hoped that they will be ſenſible of this rare indulgence, and improve it as becomes them; that they will never abuſe the gentleneſs of the adminiſtration to factious proceedings, but aſſiſt it by the ſuppreſſion of all unreaſonable commotions; that, happily tranſplanted like noxious vegetables into a milder climate, they will loſe by degrees the aſperity of their nature, and catch at leaſt from the examples of thoſe they converſe with, that Chriſtian ſpirit of lenity and forbearance, which both their principles *diſcourage*, and their ſpiritual fathers *diſclaim*.

BUT if theſe Catholics ſhould not anſwer theſe reaſonable expectations, and Proteſtants ſhould not ſucceed in their well-meant endeavours; if the former ſhould engage in black conſpiracies againſt the ſtate, and the latter ſhould be unable to detect or defeat them; if unlooked-for accidents ſhould thwart, or ſtrange viciſſitudes ſhould confound the wiſeſt and beſt form-

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ed reſolutions; in ſhort, if by a ſeries of glorious and ſucceſsful villany, Popery with it's faithful attendant, arbitrary power, ſhould gain ground; yet ſtill let us not by any mean compliance, or abject ſubmiſſion, endeavour to court the favour of a church and people whoſe *tender mercies are cruel:* Let us not depend on the inſtable foundation of Catholic gratitude, nor expect from Papiſts any ſuitable returns to our unexampled lenity and moderation.

LET us remember, that the firm and obdurate policy of *Rome* will not eaſily bend to the circumſtances of the diſtreſſed; and that the humble as well as lofty ſpirit will be equally overturned in it's *wild and furious* expedition to intereſt and revenge.

LET this conſideration therefore likewiſe effect in us, what it naturally ſhould, and what all the others muſt do; *i.e.* lead us to the principal and important center of zeal; let us reflect, that if it is with us now, as it was formerly with *Joſhua*, that we muſt be *ſtrong and courageous* to fight

the battles of the Lord; and let us depend upon it as a certain and indiſputable truth, that it is much eaſier to prevent the evils of Popiſh tyranny in it's infancy, or reſiſt them during it's growth, than to abate it's fury or eſcape it's vengeance, when it is fatally arrived at it's maturity and perfection.

*F I N I S.*

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